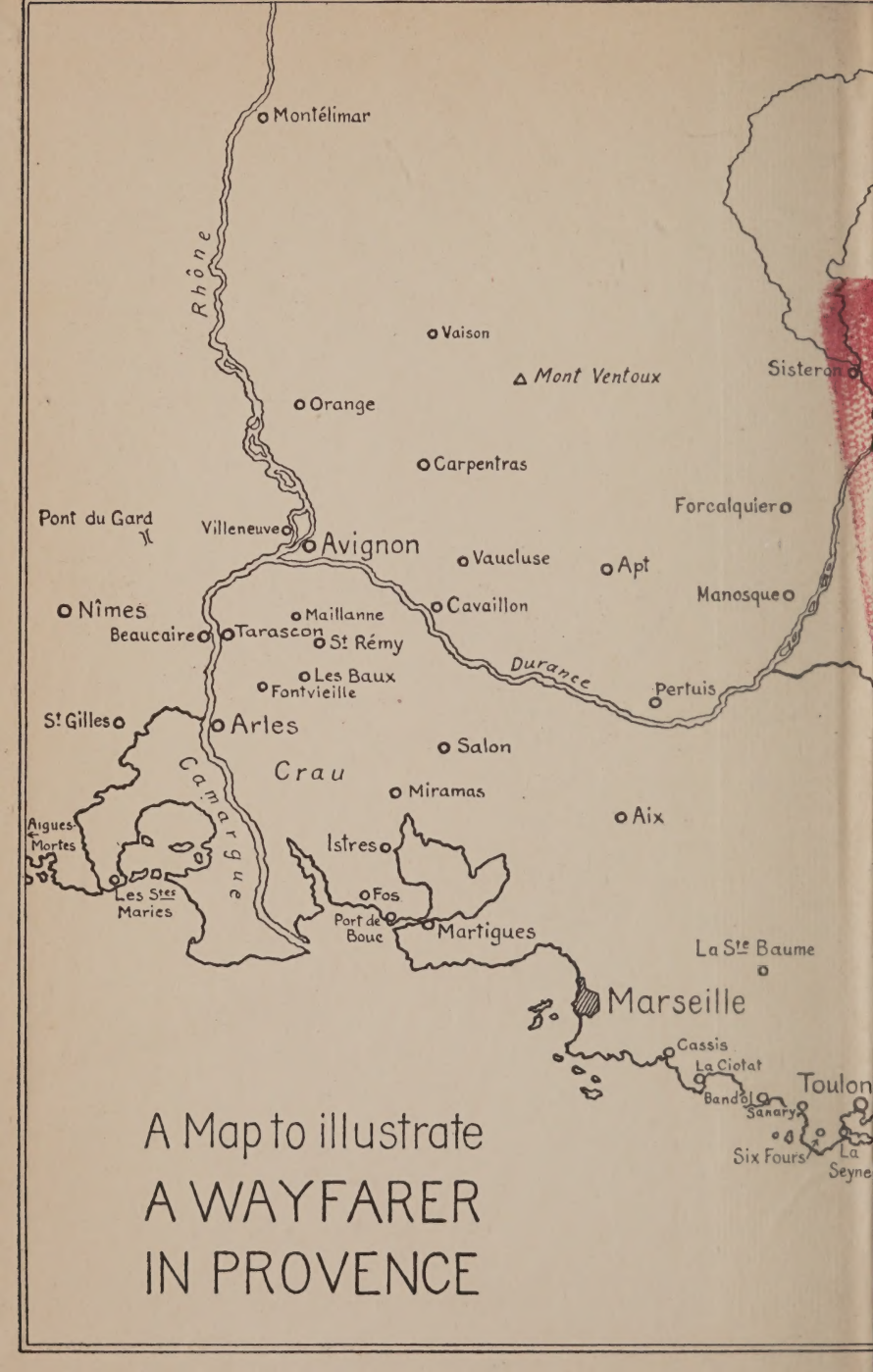

A Map to illustrate
A WAYFARER IN PROVENCE

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A WAYFARER IN PROVENCE

RUE KLÉBER, SAINT-RÉMY

A WAYFARER IN PROVENCE

BY

E. I. ROBSON

WITH TWELVE ILLUSTRATIONS BY

J. R. E. HOWARD

AND A MAP

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PREFACE

EVEN Provence — certainly the Riviera — changes. Though the Tarasque still leers at us in the Museon Arlaten, the proposed removal of the statue of Mireille at Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer has been the subject of heated debate ; St. Raphael now has a casino ; Monte Carlo has opened new tennis-courts ; Cannes has " reconstructed " its front, between the Gardens and the Casino, and has done what Canute could not do, forbidden the (there almost tideless) sea to encroach overmuch on the children's beach. Most wonderful of all, encouraged by the measures of Italy's Duce farther along, the French Riviera authorities are actually trying to reduce street noises, doctors having discovered that too much noise is not good for nerve patients.

Still it is hoped that the facts given in the following pages, the results of repeated visits, are to date. If the noises should have stopped, so much the better for the visitors.

A certain amount of repetition in this book is conscious. On successive journeys things sometimes repeated themselves.

It was a great kindness of Mrs. Latimer Jackson to read the book in typescript and offer from her keen literary sense several helpful suggestions. The Editor of the " Autocar " has kindly filled from expert knowledge what must have remained a gap. I have said nothing about travel by canal and river for non-seagoing boats, by Rouen and Lyons : but it can be done with comparative ease, and a sort of

journeying which brings one down the Rhône should be encouraged.

The illustrations have been carefully chosen from a considerable number of drawings made on the spot for the purpose of this work.

E. I. R.

February, 1926

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A WAYFARER IN PROVENCE

CHAPTER I

PROVENCE

PROVENCE suggests at once historical romance and romantic history. Dowered as was Italy with the "fatal dower of beauty," it was—like Italy—invaded by cruel ravishers, from the magnificently-brutal Roman onwards.

With the great monuments of Roman luxury at Arles, Nîmes, Orange and elsewhere, one can be in no doubt as to the policy of those conquerors. More transient perhaps were Visigoths and Saracens; but whoso would see the traces of succeeding invasions let him go to Carcassonne and note the different handiwork in the fortifications of the city.

But apart from history, Provence is full of other kindred interests.

It is the land of legend, of charming folk-lore (let who will call it superstition), of pretty customs and pretty costumes, of fêtes, of bullfights, of wild horses, of hills, of stony plains, of flamingo-haunted marshlands. It is hard to know where the traveller with open eyes will find such perpetual, such ever-varied interest.

In rambling through the whole district with which we seek to deal here, we found joys and surprises at every turn. The language of the people alone will keep one busy; a baby in the railway carriage, so it be just chattering its childish Languedoc, is no longer a nuisance but a profound philological study. Little differences of phrase, of intonation, from place to place, will attract the careful listener.[1]

And it is the land of sun and colour; not perhaps the rioting colours of Spain and Portugal, but rich and glowing

[1] Natives of Tarascon, Arles, St. Rémy, and no doubt other places, greet each other with "adieu." This is done in Italy with "addio": is it done elsewhere in France?

enough. A land of vine and olive, a land made for poetry, and, as all know, the land of early poets, a nest of singing birds who taught the rest of Europe to sing aright. And if this seems to lie away in the past, there is the present-day glow of the Provençal renaissance, and, in especial, of the great Provençal epics, "Calendau" and "Mirèio," of Mistral. To these we devote a separate chapter, since travel in our corner of Provence will be illumined every way by the genius of the poet and the wonderful comprehensiveness of his works.

But Provence has for the more sternly practical traveller another virtue: it is eminently reachable, and easy to move about in. All those who go to and from the Riviera can, without much spending of time, see something of the western side of the Province. A few days, if the traveller knows what to look for, will open to him a new and utterly charming corner of the world.

Be he a mystic, a dreamer, he has come to the land of dreams and holy visions; be he athirst for the more exciting, the more thrilling things of life, he is in the midst of *Courses de taureaux, courses libres*, and wonderful performances of the gardiens with their tridents; if he is for grace and beauty of motion, he can watch a farandole.

To whet the appetite of such we give some account of these further on.

As we have already said, so much of Provence is wrapped up in Mistral and "Mirèio," that our next chapter will give indications of many of the little customs and local interests for which the traveller should keep his eyes open. But others may be mentioned here.

Artists especially, trained to watch for the picturesque, will have a wonderful time in Provence, when the mistral does not blow. But anyone who has time to observe (to do so well is, as John Stuart Mill [1] tells us, a rare faculty; but we can all learn to do so in our degree) will find enough and more than enough to delight him, apart from scenery and architecture.

Provençal cooking is good. Hotels are clean. The people are honest. I was chased along a lonely road for some kilometres by an hotel-proprietor, who had in error overcharged

[1] He, with Bishop Colenso, lies buried at Avignon. Death makes strange bed-fellows. A little book of English graves abroad might make melancholy reading, but it would be very interesting.

me a trifle. The breathless man alarmed me at first ; I did not recognize him, and took him for a tramp. With joy (quite genuine, I am sure) he greeted me and explained his error, and handed over the francs due to me. This has never happened to me elsewhere !

The folk music, if primitive in style, is pleasing. The drummer is of course a special feature ; without him in earlier days no fête, no wedding, no merrymaking, could take place.[1]

At Christmas time the " cribs " in the churches are worth much study. The figures are often old and the costumes quaint and beautiful. There is always some *blé de Noël* in a saucer, and in the background a windmill, and sometimes a model of the local Mairie.[2]

There is interest both in birds and botany, especially in the Camargue. Les Baux will keep geologists at work. Ethnologists will look out for the different types which suggest Saracen, Gothic, Roman, Greek, but they should remember the warning of Mistral, which we quote in chapter ii.

No words about Provence would be complete without some further account of the legends to which we have already referred. The country is full of them. M. Charles Roux has collected them in his " Légendes de Provence," and they are indeed most charming. Mistral and other Félibres have not lost the opportunity of narrating them. Some are legend and no more ; some are bits of coloured history.

There is no aqueduct at Arles now ; but who would be without the story of the peerless Citronelle, to whom a Roman Emperor promised, so he might win her love, to bring her water from the spring of Vaucluse in a great aqueduct ? So indeed he did ; but when he came to claim his beloved's hand, she broke it gently to him that it was already given to a " little water-carrier " who had brought her each day water from the far-off spring, while the great aqueduct was a-building.

Nowhere are the legends of the planting of the Christian religion more pleasing : The Maries, St. Martha taming the

[1] He has to be booked long beforehand. On the *tambourin* and *galoubet* generally, see a good article in " En Provence " for June 1923. See also below, chapter xviii.

[2] An excellent number of " En Provence " (Arles, 10 Rond Point des Arènes) No. 8, December 1923, illustrates Provençal Christmas customs.

dreadful Tarasque, the ever-falling tears of the Magdalene at La Sainte-Baume.

Later on came St. Gilles and his tame hind ; Sainte Roseline, whose apron-full of bread for the poor was turned, at the angry question of the Baron her father, into an apron-full of roses ; to say nothing of St. Honorat, St. Tropez, and many another saint, whether men or women, each with their beautiful and touching little story.

Then we come to the Golden Goat, that guards hidden treasures,[1] to the Far-away Princess, who smiled at one lover, pressed with her foot the foot of another, and pressed with her hand the hand of the third ; whereby much learned discussion arose which of the three she had honoured most. Then there is the splendid tale of the Countess whose lord came riding, a sore wounded and broken man, only survivor of a hard-fought field, and asked admission within his castle gates : " You are no lord of mine," she replied proudly ; " he would have died on the field, but never fled alive." Half dying as he was the Count turned his exhausted charger back again ; rallied together the countryside, and crushed the Infidel in a great battle, to be welcomed and nursed back into health and strength by his brave and loyal lady. Mistral has told it all in " Calendau." It is little wonder that a land whose very air breathes poetry should be most rich in such poetic tales, and dead indeed must be the soul of those who are not warmed with the roseate glow of them.

You cannot be a mere hustling tourist in Provence. Something of the mystic must be about you, if you are not to go away cold and empty.[2]

[1] Read Paul Arène's " Chèvre d'or."

[2] Some travel-experiences and consequent hints will be found in chapter xv.

CHAPTER II

IN THE COUNTRY OF MIREILLE

IT is possible to sail down the Mediterranean without any thought of Odysseus, to walk in Kensington Gardens without thought of Peter Pan, and over Exmoor without thought of Lorna Doone. To journey in Provence without constant remembrance of Mireille would be dull and foolish ; but in any case it is, save to the dullest and most commercial traveller, impossible. Never has fiction so dominated a country ; not even Tarascon is more full of memories of Tartarin than are Arles, Les Baux, La Camargue, and Saintes-Maries of the tender heroine of the Odyssey of Provence. Nor is this to be wondered at. Mireille, the sixteen-year daughter of a comfortable farmer, whose simple story was to love, to be crossed, and to die, is no ordinary heroine. She is a country and a people ; she is the soul of a great literary renaissance. Round her and her little story Mistral has spun and woven all that is good in Provence and Provençal life ; all that he, leader in the Provençal revival, wanted to become the heritage of the people whom he loved.

As you look on the statue of Mireille—set up by Madame Mistral in front of the Church of the Three Maries—of Mireille holding out her right hand in an agony of blind despair, and shading her head with her left, Mireille, in act to faint, but yet feeling out for the goal of her sad pilgrimage, you cannot believe that you have to do with a character of fiction, a creation of the brain. She is too utterly real. And real indeed she is ; only the reality for which Mireille stands did not faint and die, but flourishes and is strong. Nor must anyone ignorant of the great poem suppose that Mireille merely typifies the eternal feminine aspect of Provençal life. True, she is skilled in household things ; she can pull the mulberry leaves and unwind the cocoons with anyone. She has the natural and simple piety of her race ; and she has the passion of the South. But it is in her, and not in Vincent, that the strength of Provence is reflected.

Vincent may please us, but he stands for little. Maître Ramon is a fine picture of the kindly but obstinate farmer; but Mireille is stronger than brown-limbed Vincent, stronger than Maître Ramon, stronger than Ourrias, tamer of bulls.

So Mireille—be she but a creation of the brain—is yet an eternal truth, at all events in Provence. We cannot roam about Provence without knowing and loving Mireille, and picturing all we see with memories of her.

I seek in these lines to help those who do not know their Provence or their Mireille to know both—at least to know the "Mireille Country." Mireille will make their pilgrimage a joy and a new awakening. Let them, if they will, carry their red-backed or blue-backed guides, that they may be able to wrestle with distance-magnifying cabmen. But let them also carry—if not their Mireille in full with them (Prose, by Grant, Verse, by Crichton, Verse, by Harriet Preston, New York)—at any rate this humble guide-book, that Provence may speak to them not in the language of good and bad hotels, of good and bad wines, and of honest and dishonest drivers, but of a new-awakened people.

Most people will not make a special journey to see the Land of Mireille, but will take it on the way to or from the Riviera (which is still, of course, Provence, but not the Provence of the poet).

Probably the best thing to do is to stop at Tarascon; walk or drive to Maillane, lunch at Graveson (a 'bus takes you about the right time; you cannot have lunch at Maillane unless you bring your own); it was the curé of Graveson who told Daudet the story of the Elixir of Père Gaucher; ask there to taste, not the Elixir, but the wine called Férigoulet (see "Mirèio," canto III, note 2) which is grown near by; and walk or drive back to Maillane. There get a small boy or girl to show you everything connected with Mistral. Do not omit to see Valère Bernard's picture, La Farandole, which Mistral himself having, as he says, a thousand francs going begging, got Bernard, the "Félibre" of Marseille, to paint, and himself presented to the Hôtel de Ville of Maillane. The picture is realistic, with exactitude of costumes, and the arrangement of the figures has a symbolic meaning. There is a fragment of a Roman wall and column; the trees are the trees of Provence; among them twines the dance, led by a young girl who seems (like Mireille herself) to be a living embodiment of Provence.

But clearly interest will lie chiefly in the house where Mistral worked and died, and in his monument in the little cemetery; a replica of the summer-house of Queen Jeanne at Les Baux.

Madame Mistral lives on in the Mistral house. She received me there most graciously, and I had little difficulty in seeing in her matured stateliness the earlier grace of a Queen of the Félibrige, which radiates from several photos and pictures on the walls of the Museon Arlaten. While I was both honoured and delighted with Madame Mistral's kind reception, I do not think that anyone should disturb her distinguished repose merely to see, in tourist fashion, the study where the poet worked. Those who are genuine students of Mistral's works and of the Provençal language and customs may reasonably make a request at the door (the further door from the road) and if they can talk in a scholarly way of the poet's works, may be sure of a courteous and dignified reception.

If you can be at Maillane on a Sunday you should certainly see the village coming out from Mass (about eleven, or a little earlier, to be on the safe side). To enter churches abroad with any ideas of sightseeing during services is truly reprobate; but some may be glad of an opportunity of worshipping with the Maillanais, before watching them emerge. It was just at such a time and with such a scene before him that Mistral found his Mireille, who was, like the Aphrodite of Zeuxis, a blend, as it were, of all Provençal graces. This is what he says himself: Gaston Paris was on a visit to Maillane, and Mistral took him to see the villagers leaving the church after vespers. Seeing the girls of Maillane, who lifted dark eyes, full of fire, to give a friendly smile, Mistral said, "These are my models; there is my Mireille."

Thence you may well go to St. Rémy, which plays no great part in the poem of "Mirèio," but is admirable both in itself and as a convenient stage on the way to Les Baux. St. Rémy (Hôtel de Provence) is noted for its excellent Roman arch and "mausoleum," and also for the beautiful cloisters of what is now an asylum for the insane; the asylum where Vincent van Gogh, an inmate, painted many St. Rémy pictures.

Thence, if you can, walk, sending your luggage with the weaklings of the party to Les Baux. You go along the main road till you reach, on the right, a wood of *pins*—what we should call firs; to the left, just beyond them, goes a respectable short cut (*raccourci*) which joins again the main

road, and saves you a good mile. Once on the road again —turning to left as you come out of the short cut—try no short cuts at all, though there is one, which obviously follows the main trend of the road, descending into a little valley, and rejoining at a bridge by rather a scrambling path. But keep the road, and do not break your neck.

In winter the walk will warm you, in spring you will enjoy nature best ; but most of all, you will meet the people, and become aware of their gentle voices and kind little courtesies. When you have asked the road, they will now and then (knowing you for English and mad) look back, ready to wave you in the right way when you hesitate and turn round inquiringly.

Les Baux has two hotels, La Reine Jeanne and Monte Carlo. Most people probably motor through, but it is best, as there are not too many rooms, to make sure of them beforehand.[1]

Should you be able to do so, be present at the wonderful midnight Christmas Mass, where the ancient rite of the lamb, offered by shepherds and shepherdesses, is now each year performed. But you must write very early to the curé to get a chair, or indeed, to get into the church at all. If you do go in winter, take the warmest things you have and wear them all.

Les Baux will enter much into any account of " Mirèio." It is at the foot of the Baux hills that the poem opens. But Les Baux enters also very much into Mistral's greater epic of " Calendau," which you should by all means read and re-read.

Thence you should drive or walk to Arles, stopping on the way to see, near Fontvieille, Daudet's mill,[2] and, three kilometres or so from Arles, the double ruin of Montmajour.

Just before you reach Montmajour, you will pass, on the right, a " mas " or farm high on a rock. Observe it ; should you come across the film of Daudet's *Arlésienne*, that is the farm where the film was taken, and it is a good characteristic Provençal " mas."

If you travel in January, look out at St. Rémy, Arles and elsewhere, for notices of the famous Marseille " Pastorale," one of the most remarkable blends of rollicking farce and solemn folk-devotion which can be imagined. It will all be

[1] The accommodation I found a little primitive ; but it was interesting to sleep in a room cut out (who knows how long ago ?) of the rock.

[2] Where he did not, of course, live ; he stayed at the house near by, and occasionally wrote at the mill.

in Provençal; you will lose some of the jokes, which will be as well; others you will guess, and possibly—as happened to me—a kind neighbour, seeing you are a stranger, will interpret the best things into French for you. I got, in this way, a striking example of the utter reality of drama to the folk-mind. My kind interpreter, a servant-girl, as I presume, at the point where Toni, the hero—acted by an obvious girl-actress—who has been sowing wild oats and is, in fact, for the moment, a sad dog, is blinded in a great storm. When the penny squib which represented the lightning was hurled from the wings, the servant-girl, with a broken voice, whispered—"Aveuglé, monsieur, aveuglé; et c'est dommage, parce qu'il est assez beau."

I need not say that Toni, to the great joy of every one, was, at the close, duly repaired both in sight and behaviour.[1]

Mireille, dear simple untravelled girl, had never been to Arles. But those who want to know anything of Provence must learn their Museon Arlaten by heart, and should know something also of the Musée Réattu (in the castle). In this great Museon Arlaten Mistral collected, and himself ticketed, all sorts of exhibits which illustrate wonderfully both the customs of the country and the history of its great literary Renaissance. Read Madame de Flandreysey's account of the Museum, and you will study it the more intelligently—in what special directions, will be said lower down.

From Arles (and you will do well, on the way going or coming, to visit also Orange and Avignon and Aix-en-Provence, and from Avignon, Villeneuve, if you want both much pleasure, and also much profit in your study of "Mireille") you will, as if from the plain at the foot of the rocks of Les Baux, where the Crau begins to spread before you, follow the course of poor suffering Mireille across the Camargue to Saintes-Maries. This later on we shall do; and meanwhile this rough account of the route, which any map will make clearer, must end.

"Mirèio" is a great folk-epic—an Odyssey rather than an Iliad; and Mireille, its heroine, is not only the sum of all the maidens of Maillane, but also the presentment of all the history, all the legend, all the piety, all the simple country life, of Provence.

[1] A note on the *Pastorale* is given later, in the chapter on Provençal customs (p. 226).

To understand "Mirèio," therefore, you must keep your eyes open, and you must know beforehand what to look for.

If you go in Christmas-time it will be ill to look with lack-lustre eyes on the *blé de Noël* in the little saucers, without which every crèche would be incomplete. It would be sad if you could not recognize a *fougasse*. It would be dingy if the folds of a fichu have no message for you.

You must therefore read and study, and what pleasanter study there can be, it were hard to say. Though travelling in hordes has its painful side, both to the horde itself, and to its chance fellow-passengers, I can think of few things more genuinely profitable than for a circle or reading-society to study all that belongs to Provence during the winter months, and then visit the country at Easter. For girls' schools and women's colleges no happier study-course and holiday-tour can be imagined. But it is men's work too; and most of the best books are by men.

First and foremost, then, read and study Mistral himself. Read his Memoirs (in Provençal or in French: any good Paris bookseller will get hold of all these books), one of the most delightful of all autobiographies. There you get life on the Provençal "mas" or farm, and later, the story of "the great movement of the Félibres."

Study from beginning to end, "Mirèio" (in original, with French translation, published by Lemerre, Paris, or Fasquelle, Paris: a beautiful edition de luxe by Dorbon-Ainé, Paris) and read also, among Mistral's own works, "Calendau" (if time permits) and certainly "Nerto" (a wonderful picture of mediæval Avignon) and the "Poème du Rhône," which will help (if help is needed) that wondrous river to lay its mystic grip upon you. Read Daudet's "Lettres de mon Moulin"; Paul Arène, and others. But certain special lines of study are quite essential. It would be absurd to go to Provence without some knowledge of its legends; and while "Mirèio" will give you much, you cannot do better than read "Légendes de Provence" by J. Charles-Roux (published by Bloud et Cie, Bibl. Régionaliste).

For Provençal customs, Madame de Flandreysey's account of the Arles Museum has already been mentioned. It is brilliant and most complete.

But there is another subject of most fascinating study; it is that of Provençal types and Provençal dress. Of course I speak chiefly of the women; but there are handsome men at

Tarascon, and wonderful Greek gods ride the white Camargue horses. But it is, as every one knows, at Arles that Provençal beauty of feature, figure, and dress luxuriates. The guide-books tell you (why I know not) that the Arles women represent the "ancient type of Roman beauty." They are Greek, as Greek as their Venus (whom you should see in the Louvre on the way, though there is a copy in the Arles town hall). But other types can be found. At Garde-Freinet it is said that you meet the Saracen dark oval faces; and elsewhere, other types, such as the Piedmontese Italian, sometimes with blue Lombard eyes and fair hair, can be found.

But it is the type which is at its best in Arles, and at its very best in the imperial-looking women of sixty, and in the quite magnificent old grandmothers of seventy, which really predominates, and has (as Mistral said) full right to be called Provençal. Hear Mistral's words: "There are no races. One meets a beautiful girl, and says 'A Greek!' or perhaps, 'A Roman!' I reply, 'No, a Provençale!' . . . The *genius loci* is still with us!"

It is a pity not to know something of the history of a people of so great beauty; its Phœnician period; the Phocæan (Greek) colony of Marseille and its influence; Roman invasion and settlement; Visigoth irruptions, and so on. This history can easily be studied, but easiest in "Le Costume en Provence" by J. Charles-Roux (published by Bloud et Cie; a larger edition by Lemerre).

As the title shows, M. Charles-Roux is really "out" to give a history of the charming modern Arles fashion; but he cannot avoid talking a good deal of the Arles beauty and also incidentally of Provençal customs, and of the great folk-dress and folk-beauty fêtes which Mistral organized. The charm of the Arles dress is chiefly in the simple "ribbon" head-dress, and the "chapelle" and fichu. If you want to appreciate the despairing Mireille's hasty morning toilette, you must read all M. Charles-Roux' book well and wisely, not only the special chapter he gives to that subject. But besides the girls and stately women of Provence, you must be ready to study the shepherds, drummers, and others who keep to inherited dress. Examples, of course, you will find, with everything else that matters, in the Arles Museum; and you should study carefully the little figures from the Provençal Nativity Crèches and other Scriptural settings.

If you want to see serenity (which I take to be the chief

note of Arlesian beauty) at its best, go and see the figure of St. Martha at Tarascon, in the dim crypt ; feel your way carefully down the dark stairs, and then, by the light of some votive taper, look on the marble image of her who was cumbered with much serving, and now is the most perfect picture of serenity I have ever seen—even including the famous tomb at the Charterhouse of Burgos. Truly St. Martha deserves the inscription carved over her, *Sollicita non turbatur.*

It would be well also to make a little nature study ; to know something of the vine and the olive, and to be able to identify the many plants and bushes of the Crau and the Camargue which have each their honoured niche somewhere in " Mirèio."

Above all things, shake off every vestige you retain of ideas or memories of stage Frenchmen and Frenchwomen. Blot from your mind all the rubbish you have been told about the French people and the French character. Take the Provençal folk as you find them ; still simple, honest, kind, pious, musical, busy, handsome. What more can you ask ?

MISTRAL

A short account of Mistral's life will make clear a good many of the allusions that have been made to him, and will set his career into its proper relation with the literary history of Provence. He was born in 1830 near Maillane. His education was a little bit irregular as we shall presently see. He was a student of law at Aix, and from 1851 he devoted his life to poetry, and also to his great and constant aim of causing the glory of Provence and the poetry of her troubadour days to live once more. It was on the 21st of May, 1854, at Font Ségugne that the society called by the strange name of Félibrige was founded. It is no use searching for the meaning of the name ; it was much the best that it should mean either nothing or everything, that it should have a general air of mystery and harmony about it.

Mistral was not the first of the new Provençal poets, but none the less he was the greatest. From his house at Maillane his poems penetrated through all Europe, and created for themselves a very large circle of admirers. " Mirèio " was published in 1859, a new type of poem, alternating idyll and

epic, a poem in which a good deal of ordinary realism was softened by the genuine inspiration of the poet. It was right that a work meant to revive the glories of Provence should enshrine the thought of perpetual youth. Vincent and Mireille remind us of Paul and Virginia. In 1867 came the much more powerful work, a true epic—"Calendau." It is the epic of the soul of Provence, full of symbolism, and giving a picture of the newer nature of Provence, fiery and energic and devout. "Lis Isclo d'Or" is a collection of lyric poems in which Mistral seems to turn aside from the fierceness of his epic to meditate and dream. "Nerto" tells us of mediæval Avignon. Nerto is doomed to death, but her beauty and a great love that comes to her saves her. His lyric drama—La Rèino Jano—was meant to rehabilitate the queen who has been accused of husband-murder, but the drama also calls forth the thought of ancient Provençal liberty. The poem, "Lou Pouèmo dóu Rose," was the old life of the Rhône, when there flowed up and down its currents a busy, proud and religious people, the good old days, in other words, that are now brushed aside for an iron age without kindness, graciousness, or ideals.

A later collection of lyrics was "Lis Oulivado," Mistral's swan songs. But besides this he wrote his great work—a dictionary of all the peculiarities of the Provençal tongue—"Lou Tresor dóu Félibrige." The book is not by any means a mere dictionary, but each word will tell its tale and reveal something of the story of the land. Then he published a large number of speeches delivered on great occasions, and all to the glory of his beloved Provence. But the most charming of his prose works is a little book called "Memòri e Raconte" to which we have already referred, and which all who want to know anything of Provence must read from beginning to end. Perhaps we may remind readers again that this book can be had in French, and Mistral's poems are published with French translation on the right hand pages.

The story of Mistral's mother is a perfectly charming little bit of patriarchal history. Here it is:

"One year, on St. John the Baptist's Day, Master Francis Mistral was in his cornfields which a bevy of reapers were cutting with the sickle. A little swarm of gleaners came up after them, picking up the ears which escaped the binders. My father noticed a handsome girl who kept always a little behind as if she were shy of gleaning like the

rest. He went up to her and said, ' And who are you, and what is your name ? ' The girl replied, ' I am the daughter of Etienne Pouillet, the mayor, and my name is Adelaide.' ' What ! ' said my father, ' The daughter of the mayor going gleaning ! ' ' Well,' she replied, ' we are a large family, six girls and two boys, and though my father is well enough off, if we ask him for something a little extra he replies to us, " Children, if you want to make yourselves look smart you must earn the money yourselves," and that is why I am come gleaning.' Six months after this meeting, which reminds us of the old story of Ruth and Boaz, the farmer begged of Master Pouillet the hand of Adelaide in marriage."

Those who go to the Museon Arlaten will see thrown over Mistral's cradle a little tiny suit, clearly of the best Sunday clothes. Mistral himself tells the story of this. He must needs have a handful of irises which were growing in the ditch. The little five-year-old boy stretches out his hand to grasp the flowers, and in he goes. Up runs his mother, saves him from the water, and makes him run home, where she dries him and gives him his best Sunday clothes. Off he goes again, some irresistible charm carries him towards the ditch, the little golden flowers were still there in the very middle of the water, nothing could hold him from them, and in a minute he is head over heels again. One of the farm hands cries to his mother, who comes and seizes him a second time, and puts upon him this time his very best holiday suit of clothes of black velvet. One can be sure that he was warned this time to go nowhere near his beloved irises. He sets himself therefore to look after the chickens, but one must needs run away, and naturally enough it leads him in the direction of his coveted irises, and there they are, still there. This time the little boy is sure that he will get them without a tumble. He seizes hold of a stout reed that is growing on the bank, and leans carefully over the water, and in one moment he will have captured them, when in he goes head first as before. Once more his mother comes and seizes him, but this time she gives him no smacking, for she has made up her mind that this little boy who is so fond of the golden irises is not going to be an ordinary man, and this time she puts him to bed, and there he dreams of nothing but irises, and when he wakes up there is a great bunch of them upon his little cot. It was his father, his stern old father, who had gone and gathered them for him.

The story of Mistral's schooldays is quite delightful. A

strange old man of Cavaillon had bought the old convent of Saint Michael on credit, and was determined to have a school there. He scoured the country for likely boys, and when the farmers were doubtful whether they could pay the fees, M. Donnat always made things very easy. A little payment in kind would soon put that right—so much wine, or oil, or corn. And so he collected quite a large number of boys from all the countryside—from Graveson, from Tarascon, from Barbentane, from St. Pierre. The school must have been a strange one. The head master was mostly away trying to get more pupils, one or two old seminarists were there as assistant masters, there was a chaplain and a music teacher. There still remained a beautiful little chapel of the old monastery, and the buildings of the convent were in sufficient order to be used as school buildings of some sort or other.

One winter evening all the boys were busy at their desks with M. Donnat there to keep order. A deep sepulchral voice cries from without—" Donnat, give me back my bell ! " Donnat, turning pale, left his desk with a few of the bigger boys about him, and the little ones all crowding behind. There, by the moonlight, on a rock, they see a sort of gaunt shadow, a great tall man in a long black robe, who cried, " Donnat, give me back my bell ! " M. Donnat turned and said, " It is only Brother Philip."

Brother Philip had imposed upon himself the task of repairing all the hermitages that he found up and down Provence. He would manage somehow with what he could beg to buy a hermitage from the proprietor, repair the walls, and he would always place there a bell. Then he would try to find some worthy man who was prepared to combine the business of hermit and gardener, and would go off to rebuild another one.

On the feast of Corpus Christi the school was taken to Boulbon to swell the great procession of bottle-bearers. One must regret to say that the chaplain of the school, who was taking the chief part in the ceremony, rather anticipated the termination of this strange service. It was the curé of Boulbon who had to give the order to uncork the bottles, and to keep silence during the benediction. Then came a solemn formula for the benediction of the wine, and then, according to the old custom, each one drank just a little mouthful from the open bottles. It is entirely a man's festival, the

women of the district always drinking water, and the girls being always told that water-drinking will make them grow up beautiful.

Perhaps these little extracts from an altogether charming book may incite readers to read the book through from beginning to end.

CHAPTER III

AVIGNON AND THE RHÔNE

WE really enter Provence, coming from the north, at Montélimar, a town mostly associated in the English mind with its manufacture of nougat. One is not allowed to forget this. Nougat is thrust at you the moment you enter the railway station. It is, however, extremely good, and one cannot credit quite the story which I read in a newspaper not long ago that nougat is made of very ancient Chinese eggs. At any rate, apart from the nougat, Montélimar is interesting. It has an old castle, and four gates remain in the old walls. From Montélimar one can go to Nyons or Grignan, where there is a most picturesque castle which will attract any artist. There is also a fine sixteenth-century church below the great terrace of the castle.

But the first great Provençal centre is Avignon.

AVIGNON

Everybody knows that on the Bridge of Avignon everybody used to dance.[1]

There is little enough bridge left to dance on now, but it must have been a wonder of the world in its day. The new bridge is very long and very dull; you never know when you are really over it, and it sways and moves unpleasantly when heavy traffic comes along. But cross it you must; not only because it is the correct thing, but in order to get from half-way, and better still, from Villeneuve, and from the Fort S. André, a glorious view of the Rhône and the great palace, and also to see Villeneuve itself, its Hospice, its Charter-house, and its charming twisty streets.

My first view of Avignon was from the railway at dawn, whence it appeared

> "a rose-red city, half as old as time:"

but I have never caught that glimpse again.

[1] The first verse of the old song says, "Tout le monde y passe." The bridge was, of course, one of the chief crossings of the Rhône.

Still, from any view-point, and in all lights, Avignon is superb. Ugly as the palace is in itself, as a group of massive walls, with its setting of towers and spire about it, it is utterly magnificent. Besides the great church by the palace, there are fine churches ; though the grave of Laura, in the church of the Cordeliers, has perished, with most of the church. Those who desire to know something of Provençal ways should see the Musée Calvet ; and there are also wonderful private collections to which entry may perhaps, by inquiry, be had. Not far off is l'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue and the fountains of Vaucluse (l'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue is the station).

There are 'buses to Villeneuve, and there you can see the hospice, its museum, its gallery, and its splendid tomb. In the museum is a marble mask of Blanche of Castille : such masks are rare (one authority states that only six are known[1]) ; the idea was to get the features carved by some celebrated sculptor, and then, apparently, the mask would be fitted to a plaster bust.

As you wander about the streets of Villeneuve look out for glorious doorways, with massive oak doors, often heavily nailed and ironed, passing, alas ! into decay. Within some splendid carved portal one sees a great heavy door, frayed and worn, and a hole kicked in the lower edge, through which emerges some dingy meagre house-cat. It must have been a town of great palaces in its day.

In the church is the very lovely ivory Madonna, worth going far to see ; a Renaissance work carved long before the Renaissance, full of delicate tender feeling.

The ruined chartreuse is beautiful ; and the fort is well worth climbing to, if only for the glorious view across the Rhône.

There is one special feature of the chartreuse : it is still dwelt in by an odd assortment of folk who have carved out for themselves tenements by no means up to London County Council standard in the old cloisters and elsewhere. No doubt that is exactly what happened in mediæval days. Everywhere round castles or monastery houses the poor clustered and gathered. Not so long ago the Lices (or space between inner and outer fortifications) at Carcassonne were encumbered with dwellings ; and there are old prints showing the arena of Arles a mass of little houses.

It is wise to walk back across the unending bridge, and

[1] I think Dr. Bode is wrong ; I found another at the museum of Aix. This mask may be of Jeanne de Laval.

watch Avignon growing as you near it. Unending indeed the bridge seemed to me, the last time I crossed it ; for just on the Villeneuve side I found in the middle of the road a giant rake —as it was obviously a danger to traffic I picked it up, and was about to lean it against the parapet for some more active passenger to carry off, when I espied in the dim distance a man pushing a hand-cart, who I gathered might be the owner.

There was nothing to do but shoulder the weapon and hasten after him ; people turned and stared at the man with the muck rake ; some seeing my insular stride (conspicuous even under my burden) smiled tolerantly upon the mad Englishman, out to be eccentric, bearing so fantastic a walking-stick ; I, for my part, hastened on, knowing that once my hand-cart man had reached the Avignon end, he would be lost in its tortuous streets for ever. After frantic attempts to shout Hi ! in French (holà ! is, I believe, the correct thing) I was obliged to break into a trot, and breathless and weary just caught the overjoyed and deeply grateful owner of the implement before he was lost in a narrow " ginnel." It is best to cross the Bridge of Avignon light.

No one I suppose who has travelled at all has failed to note that you are no sooner in a new place than people come and ask you the way. A proud traveller is he who can put the natives wise on their own ground. My companion was stopped in Avignon by a motor, whose driver urgently asked for a certain street. Being a man of much aplomb, and unwilling to be beaten, he glanced rapidly up and with much triumph was able to reply, " But you are in it now ! " " Impossible ! " cried the motorist ; " it is somewhere round a corner." " Pray regard the plaque there, Monsieur," replied my adroit friend, " you see the name you are demanding." One cannot always score as easily and as surely as this.

The lover of Provençal literature will revel in the Avignon bookshops, where he can find the most recondite works of the Félibres. At dinner, if he wants to be truly inspired, let him not omit to demand Châteauneuf du Pape. It is generally red, but once at Orange I lit upon a " white " (really amber) variety which was utter nectar.

It is well, in spring and summer, to reach Avignon from Lyons by steamer. P.L.M. tickets are interchangeable ; and the great Rhône is a perpetual joy.[1] You should read on

[1] A day's journey. Restaurant on board. The steamer stops the night on the return at Valence.

the way Mistral's " Poème du Rhône," where he laments the lost days of the great teams of horses which used to tow the barges on their leisurely voyages, and where, with a rather foolish love tale, he interweaves much beautiful and mystic legend of the river, and gives too a wonderful picture of the great Fair of Beaucaire.

You can spend much time at Avignon and not tire. You can visit thence, besides Vaucluse, the Pont du Gard, by rail to Remoulins or by road if you prefer.

But you must not stay there all the time. The great palatial city—of whose past glories and sorrows you can read in Mistral's " Nerto "—is magnificent, but not Provence, in the degree in which Arles, St. Rémy, Les Baux, and Saintes-Maries are Provence. Leave time to see much also of them.

The Palace of Avignon

It was Clement V who made Avignon the centre of the papacy, but he had no idea of staying there any length of time. He stayed quite simply in the convent of the Preaching Brothers. John II was Bishop of Avignon and remained in his palace, only making it a little larger as his new dignity demanded, but when it became clear that Avignon must be the centre of the government of the Pope, and in fact was to be the great stronghold of the papacy, Benedict XII built on the site of the episcopal palace the beginnings of the massive row of buildings that were to form the Palace of the Popes. In those days everything that was going to last must be a fortress, so a strong fortress was built without, and within was an ordinary monastery, only larger perhaps than most monasteries in those days. There was the regular cloister round its square court, but the contrast between the comparatively humble dwelling within and the massiveness of the fortress without remains to strike all thoughtful visitors. It was only during the reigns of three of four successive Popes that the fortress was finished. It bears on its front its warlike origin. It is stiffened with massive buttresses, and everywhere are windows and loopholes from which the enemy could be attacked on all sides. Its chief gate was further fortified. It had its moats and its redoubts, but these are gone. They called it the finest building in France, for though the interior might be built after the fashion of a monastery, it was none the less adorned with the work of the best Italian artists.

Naturally as all roads led to Rome, so when there was a Pope at Avignon, all roads led to Avignon. It was the centre for councils; the various religious orders had also their headquarters there, and it was in fact a town within a town.

As everyone knows the interior has suffered severely. Not only time has done its damage, but also the hand of man has been very cruel, especially during the period when it was barracks. When the Popes left Avignon, arrangements were still made to keep the great building up. All sorts of restorations were made, but towards the middle of the seventeenth century it had become hardly habitable. In the Revolution the palace became national property and it was turned into a prison. In 1792 it was decided to destroy it altogether, but ultimately it was turned into barracks, and to this at least we may owe its preservation, though to this also we owe a great deal of its desecration.

The people of Avignon at one time or another under the Empire attempted restorations. Napoleon III finally decided to restore it at the cost of the State, though his decision came to nothing owing to the events of 1870, but gradually steps were taken by the city itself and the Commission of Historic Monuments. The great rooms that had been built up and plastered over were cleared, and damaged though the interior had been in all sorts of ways, it was possible to bring it back in the present day to something like its old glories. The part of the palace which takes the attention of the tourist is perhaps the famous tower of Trouillas. It has become the centre of all sorts of curious tales. Chiefly it is thought that it was there that the torture chamber and the fires for heating the weapons of torture were to be found. One of the most charming of the legends is that told by Mistral in his "Nerto" of the secret passage that led to the palace from without beneath the Rhône, and of the little maid who came to save the besieged Pope. The St. Peter's of Avignon is of course Notre Dame des Doms, remarkable for its wonderful tomb of John II. We expect more on entering it, the palace itself being on so huge a scale, but it is none the less a very magnificent building, and worthy of what was for a time a second Rome.

It was Queen Jeanne of Naples who sold Avignon, and despite Mistral's charming rehabilitation of her, so far as such a thing is possible, in his play, we can only feel her to have been an extremely dangerous person, being gifted with beauty,

power, and the utmost capriciousness. She was certainly four times married, and possibly would have married a fifth husband had she survived. Perhaps the most famous scene in her history is her trial at Avignon before the Pope himself on the charge of murdering husband number one. It is very difficult to know at this distance of time what were the facts. It is quite certain that her eloquence and her excellent knowledge of Latin carried her through. She was not only acquitted but also received public benediction. She seems to have been rather given to selling up, or attempting to do so, as she was only prevented from selling or bargaining away a good part of Provence by being locked up by the barons. She ended in tragedy, but one cannot help remembering that she died rather than give in, having proclaimed the brother of the French King her heir. It is a strange thing, but perhaps natural enough in one way, that Naples always seemed to bring along with it fatality. Her death was the cause of new troubles of various kinds, and it seemed as if even when she was in her grave her restless spirit was causing disaster to the land over which she reigned as Countess.

Those who wish to pursue the story of this lady, unhappy and causing unhappiness, will find a great deal in Sir T. A. Cook's book, as well as a rapid and brilliant sketch in Sir Frederick Treves' "Riviera of the Corniche Road." It is well perhaps to correct one's reviewing of Mistral's play by a little serious history. The whole story of Queen Jeanne is made extremely complicated by various entangled relationships, and Sir T. A. Cook has wisely added a genealogical tree to his second volume of "Old Provence." In spite of the trouble she brought, her subjects seem to have loved her, and they refused to have any dealings at all with the murderer of their Queen.

In and Round About Avignon

Those who travel down the Rhône will certainly get a most charming view at their entering in of Avignon. It seems as if Avignon is meant to be entered in the way that most travellers would have entered it in olden days—from the river. Certainly if we do enter it this way we must take with us Mistral's poem "dóu Rose," and follow his description at every step. We pass by the Pont St. Esprit that is

SAINT-BÉNÉZET'S BRIDGE, AVIGNON

really, as Mistral says, the triumphal gate of the land of love, the entry to Provence. And then we pass to the fragment of the great bridge of St. Bénézet, and to the glories of Avignon on its giant rock—"Avignon with its tower and belfries all pointing up to the sky—Avignon so filled in ancient days with glory and splendour that she need no longer trouble her head about them."

There is a certain danger in Avignon that visitors may spend all their time in the great Palace of the Popes, and along the ramparts by the river side. But there is a great deal else that they must on no account neglect. It is true that they will first make, no doubt, for the great Place in front of the palace, and they will spend time at first in the palace itself and in the cathedral, but it will be quite wrong to stop there. Avignon is so full of history that one should see as much as possible, and be sure that one has neglected no century of its long story. Its twelfth-century glory is of course the bridge that was built by the Bridge-Building Brothers. We are told in these days that people did not dance—at any rate did not dance the "round dances," on the bridge of St. Bénézet, but beneath the bridge on the Isle of Barthelasse. One need not take the old song quite so seriously. The bridge was the great meeting place of either side of the Rhône, and in a sense all the world would pass over it, and where the Provençaux walk they will commonly dance.

The old chapel of St. Bénézet on the second pier of the bridge was built at the same time, and broken, as was the bridge, in the siege of 1226; it was built again some ten years afterwards. It has been of course restored at different times since.

Outside the walls on the way to Tarascon are the remains of a church of St. Ruf that belongs to about the same time as the Cathedral. It is now put to profane uses.

The Palace, as is known, is mostly of the fourteenth century. This we have described already, and it will certainly be the object of very close and careful inspection by every visitor, but these should not on any account forget the great collegiate churches, the palaces of the cardinals, and the monasteries, Avignon being the great centre for a time of all the various Orders, and the home of an untold number of guilds and confraternities. Each cardinal had his mansion. Some of them are gone and others have been changed beyond recognition, but here and there in the streets one recognizes

them by some little tower, perhaps by the size and thickness of the walls. The Lycée has the remains of the house of Cardinal de la Motte in a fine house of the eighteenth century. In the Place de la Mirande there are the remains of the great palace of Cardinal Grimoard. But there are still plenty of fourteenth-century fronts recognizable, even if altered. In the Rue St. Étienne are two houses which once seem to have formed the great palace where lived Jeanne of Naples, the much married Queen. There were also the great monasteries; the church, for instance, and monastery of the Dominicans, a church in which two popes were crowned, and no less than a hundred and fifty bishops are said to be buried. It was destroyed at the Revolution, but a few fragments of its sculpture can be seen at the Musée Calvet. Then there remains the belfry of the Grands Augustins, and on the Place Pie there is a door which is thought to have belonged to the Commanderie of the Knights of Rhodes. All that was left of the Convent of the Cordeliers has been now built into a school. But this monastery was one of the finest and most celebrated of Avignon, where, as was thought, was found at the beginning of the sixteenth century the tomb of Laura. There were also three great collegiate churches, and they still stand. St. Agricol came from Lérins and built a little sanctuary for his brother monks. This was destroyed, according to tradition, by the Saracens, but the present church was built in 1358 by one of the cardinals. Those who visit the church must study especially the beautiful Lady Chapel, and then the belfry of the Hôtel de Ville. St. Pierre is also well worth studying, though of course it has suffered a good many changes since it was built somewhere about 1358. Its front, for instance, is Gothic. As one enters one has a slight shock passing from the brilliance of the Gothic façade to the simplicity of the fourteenth-century nave. There is, of course, a good deal of later work within the building—chiefly the woodwork of the seventeenth century.

St. Didier was rebuilt in 1358, again by a cardinal, this time also an archbishop, and is of one nave only, and not striking to look at outside. It was once extremely rich in works of art; a great deal, alas! was broken to pieces by the revolutionaries.

Most interesting perhaps in the history of Avignon, after the popes, the cardinals and the monasteries, are the confra-

ternities, of which there were many centred in the papal city. These confraternities were pious associations of people who desired to keep strictly the ordinary rules of the Christian life, and to show their religion in practice by doing works of mercy. Always numerous in the South of France, they must have been extremely numerous in Avignon. They were encouraged by the papal government. They formed a kind of bulwark against the possibility of heresy such as that of the Albigenses, and they were popular because they contributed very largely to the magnificent processions which have always so much delighted the people of the South. There were at least seven such confraternities in Avignon ; there are only three left now—the Grey Penitents, the White Penitents, and the Penitents of Mercy. They have their chapels, and on the day appointed the members still unite there as they have done for many centuries. One finds in these little chapels the real mediæval Avignon in the midst of Avignon of to-day. It is near the ruined tower of the Cordeliers that we find the old abode of the Confraternity of the Grey Penitents. It is said that their chapel was built on the very spot where, by way of reparation for the crimes of the heretical city in 1226, Louis VIII, covered with grey sackcloth, himself led a procession to the little chapel on the banks of the Sorgue, and it is thought that the present chapel is built on this very site. There is a well known legend which is said to have increased very much the popularity of these penitents. The Rhône and the Sorgue were in flood, the chief of the confraternity took a boat, fearing that the flood might have reached the tabernacle, and found that the waters were indeed in the chapel, but piled up on right and left against the walls, leaving a free path to the altar.

The Church of Notre-Dame-la-Principale, one of the oldest churches of Avignon, was founded by King Boson of Provence. A part of it now belongs to the White Penitents, and on the walls of the church are some ancient pictures from the first little church of this confraternity. In the old days the White Penitents had built a sanctuary in the garden of the Dominican Convent—a little chapel which was one of the curiosities of Avignon, but a gruesome curiosity, for it was ornamented, as one sometimes finds these ancient chapels ornamented, by human bones. This was a very famous confraternity ; kings had belonged to it, and had followed, taper in hand, in their magnificent processions. Most of the nobles

wore its white robe with the design of the Sacred Heart and the Crown of Thorns.

The Penitents of Mercy have their chapel on the banks of the Sorguette—a beautiful and charming little building, very different indeed from the gloom of the original chapel of the White Penitents, for it breathes nothing but happiness and the luxury of worship. In the old days the Penitents of Mercy used to meet in the chapel of the old hospital of Notre Dame de Fenouillet. It was in the eighteenth century that their little chapel received its ornamentation.

No one should leave Avignon without seeing something of these three little chapels, which remind us of a side of mediæval life which we are sometimes apt to forget altogether.

The history of Avignon in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has not lost its interest, but the buildings which belong to these periods have not the charm of those of the earlier dates. Avignon suffered seriously in the Revolution, and in later times it has been diligently built and rebuilt—unfortunately not always in the direction of beautifying the ancient city.

In the neighbourhood of Avignon are many places of very real interest to which one can quite easily make a series of short excursions; several of them, in fact, can be combined. One finds them scattered round the foot of Mont Ventoux, and while it is true they are only rather of the same type, still, in each, one will find some special and charming characteristic. There is, for instance, Caromb—which will indeed be found to count for only a line or so in the guide-books—which has a beautiful fourteenth-century church, and the remains of what was a fine tomb of Étienne de Vaësc. There is Mazan, on one of the gates of which is written—"Once in our walls, always in our hearts." It has its four gates that remain from its ancient fortifications. Its church has been entirely reconstructed. It has a strange and beautiful cemetery outside the town, and there are long rows of Gallo-Roman tombs about its walls and in the centre an old sunk chapel. At Mazan was born Bernus, who, with Péru, was responsible for so many of the sculptures of Avignon.

Venasque has a beautiful baptistry. The town stands picturesquely on its great rocks. The church has an eleventh-century crypt, and at the end of the church is this ninth-century baptistry, somewhat hidden by other buildings. It was long thought to have been a temple of Venus. It

may indeed be earlier, for some say it possibly goes back to the seventh century, and in its construction have been used the remains of more ancient monuments, some of marble. It has four apses, and the curious work of its construction suggests it belongs to a very early date. It is entirely dull and unadorned outside—so much of it as one is able to see.

At St. Didier there is a fine castle, now transformed. Pernes was once the capital of the county, and it, also, retains four of its ancient gates. The castle of Pernes has also suffered transformation. The church has something of the eleventh century, and its south porch has been thought to be even Roman. It is certainly of quite an early date. Pernes is a little town full of strange recollections ; St. Martha is said to have prayed and preached here, it has had its troubadour poet, and Luther stayed some time in one of its convents, while the town hall originally was the house of the Brancas.

Of Carpentras we will speak later on, in connection with its ancient monumental arch. This has suffered very much in process of time ; for some period it was built up in the kitchen of the episcopal palace. In the town itself the general appearance suggests that of very early days. There was a large Jewish quarter here, but this has been demolished ; the synagogue remains. The church of St. Suffrein was built on the site of several predecessors, and its architect came all the way from Brittany. None the less its interior of a single nave records in some sense some of the churches of Avignon. Those who study the works of Bernus will find much of interest in this church, where the decoration of the choir gives a special opportunity of estimating his versatile talent. The museum is very well worth a visit, and possesses at least one most precious picture. If we search for the works of Bernus we should visit Bédarrides, where there is a very beautiful statue of the Virgin which once stood in one of the streets of the town. It is now above the porch of the church.

Châteauneuf-Calcernier is better known perhaps from its famous wine—under its name "Châteauneuf du Pape"—than from its ancient castle which was built partly by John XXII.

West of Avignon we shall find a little village that has an honourable name in the history of Provençal literature : this is Font-Ségugne. Here, as Mistral tells us, on a Sunday in May, 1854, in full spring time, there met seven poets—Giéra, Roumanille, Aubanel, Mathieu, Brunet, Tavan, the peasant,

and Mistral himself. It was then that they took the name, unintelligible so far as history and origin goes, of Félibres, which they found in an old song sung by the peasants of Maillane.

Those who like mixture of architecture will find a very curious castle at Saumane, not far from Vaucluse, a mediæval building partly rebuilt in the Renaissance style, and partly in the classic style of the seventeenth century. The old castle of the twelfth or thirteenth century was reconstructed at the end of the fifteenth. This rather odd mixture of styles none the less has resulted in a very picturesque building.

Avignon in the Old Days

As one walks up and down Avignon, and goes from room to room of the great Palace of the Popes, one tries, but very often in vain, to people the empty spaces with those crowds that moved and jostled one another in the days when the Popes held court there. Daudet has done something for us in his charming tale; Mistral has made Avignon live again for us; Petrarch gives a gloomy picture, but none the less it is a live place still. But we will try for a moment to imagine ourselves back in the days of the Popes and see how the vast crowd that settled about the palace was composed. Avignon itself was in those days so crowded that it was hard to get any sort of lodging there. Even ambassadors were obliged to go to Villeneuve or elsewhere. The moment Avignon became the centre of the Catholic world a great flood of strangers poured into its walls. The Germans had their own brotherhood or club; the great Italian bankers had their offices—we hear at one time of forty-three money-changers or bankers in the city. Architects were brought from France and painters from Italy. Lawyers of every sort, of course, flocked there, and we need hardly say that merchants of every sort, writers and binders of books, and workers in gold and silver were plentiful as well. No wonder the great Palace of the Popes was too small for all the hangers-on of the Pope's court. Apart from regular merchants, there would always be at such a place a very large number of mere adventurers. There had to be quite a large police force to cope with them, and a special judge was appointed to investigate criminal cases.

Nearest, of course, to the Pope himself would be his various

relations. Brothers, nephews, nieces, cousins, would flock to swell his household. The ladies of the Pope's family were given special privileges; they were allowed, for instance, to wear ermine, and gold or silver jewellery. Next would come the squires, who would all be of noble family. At the gates to the Pope's apartments would be special porters to scrutinize the visitors, while there would be a large number of other attendants both to guard other doors, and also to prepare the hall for a great audience. As the palace was also a fortress, there were several sergeants-of-arms who had charge, among other things, of the Pope's prison. There would be some thirty chaplains about the court; each would have their special office. There were special attendants who had to do with the robing or disrobing of the Pope for any special ceremonies. There was a special band of learned men presided over by a master of theology. We need hardly mention the horde of cooks, stewards, secretaries, and so on. Very important were the people who had to taste always the wine that the Pope was about to drink. There was a special official in charge of the fruits for dessert. As there were large stables, there were special persons charged with looking after the horses and mules. There were messengers, mounted and otherwise, to carry the Pope's letters and do his commands. There was a special steward for wax; no doubt he was in charge of the candles. There were water-carriers, bell-ringers, washermen and washerwomen, barbers, doctors, and so on. It is estimated that there would be something like four hundred people in direct attendance upon the Pope. The cost of administration must have been enormous. John II is said to have spent three millions of francs for his own staff in pay and in keep during one year. If we realize that this long list of officials comprises only those who were concerned in the palace itself, we can understand how crowded Avignon must have been so that one could hardly pass through its narrow streets.

Sport in Avignon of To-day

At Avignon in April, on the Ile de la Barthelasse, we were fortunate in seeing *six magnifiques taureaux travaillés par Paco Carita et sa cuadrilla*, as the posters gave it.

First there was a procession round the city, but Paco was evidently too great a man to demean himself by taking part.

The arena is a stone wall, more or less circular, and little besides: there is, of course, the usual low fence over which the toreros vault, and outside that, a high fence of iron bars; then come a number of forms without backs, a few chairs in the shade, and a small raised platform with chairs for the President and others. There is also, naturally, a *toril*, but primitive. Everything, in fact, was primitive.

At 3 o'clock the meeting opened with the formal entry of the band—trumpets and drums, and the cuadrilla of three. Paco and his underlings were dressed as Spanish Toreros. A trumpet announced the first bull. Much play with capes; then one pair of banderillas was fixed, and then Paco passed to the muleta. Instead of sword he had a stick with a big rosette on the end wrapped and concealed in paper. After various passes, the espada must jab the bull with the stick as he would with a sword, and lo and behold the rosette comes away and remains stuck in the *garrot* (the shoulders). Thence the rosette (there are ribbons, eight or nine inches long, dangling from it) is snatched with the bare hand; and the troubles of that bull are over. There are no picadors, and only one pair of banderillas is fixed, but one has the whole Spanish bull-fight less slain horses and slain bulls. It is really rather difficult to think that the bull suffers much except a great escape of steam.

The first bull was so ferocious that Paco gave up the rosette, and the bull was dismissed proudly wearing it. The crowd did not omit to remind Paco of this, and at odd intervals he was saluted with cries *Paco Carita! où est la cocarde du premier?* His dignity did not permit reply to this "barracking," especially as the bull had knocked him down and torn his beautiful gold-laced jacket. Later on, Paco, sitting in a chair, planted banderillas in his bull, but the bull just got him, and after a rough and tumble close up to the fence, which looked serious, Paco had to be lifted up over the barrier and have repairs done to his knickerbockers. He reappeared shortly, though bodily and sartorially a bit the worse for wear.

One bull refused to leave the ring, though the decoy came in several times and showed the way. Much time and sweat beneath a blazing sun were spent in attaching a rope to his horns; it took eight men a good twenty minutes or more—then, without a tug, the bull walked out like a lamb!

Two teams of local amateurs, very daring and skilful, com-

peted for a prize. They wore white shirts and trousers and red sashes, and went through the same motions as Paco and his squadron, but with young bulls.

Finally came a bull, very fierce, but with leather buttons on his horns, and he was *pour le public*. He had the cocarde between his horns, but nobody got it, and after all it was only worth 25 francs. One man, clearly the local humourist, was looking to the crowd for applause, neglectful of the bull, who at the moment was coming for him like a *train de luxe*. He was shifted a considerable distance, and though uninjured, thanks to the buttons, he spent the rest of the show cheering on the others from the safe side of the barrier.

Several times a bull jumped the barrier, and then, as one good turn deserves another, every one vaulted it into the arena, till the bull got there again.

Avignon was kind enough to give us also a Fête Provençale on Easter Monday. It was entitled on the posters *La Camargue aux Arênes*.

It started with a procession round the city (as everything does), with band, tambourinaires, and farandoleurs. The show itself, at the Arênes de Bagatelle, began with the " présentation de la manade " : a herd of about two dozen bulls, old and young, was driven into the ring. The gardiens on their white Camargue horses came in, and the fun began. This was (though we could not quite catch the object and points of the game) the cutting out of one bull from the others, by riding him down. This was repeated till four or five bulls were picked out, and the rest were then driven off. It was all quite exciting and meant much galloping about by horses and bulls.

Then came a farandole by boys and girls with a man of fifty or sixty as leader. The traditional costume was worn, white with red sash and red beret, and the music was provided by the tambourinaires, who were boys. It is wonderful what can be done with the galoubet, with its three holes ; we expected something simple like bugle calls, but we were pleasantly surprised by its melodies. The sound is naturally rather thin and shrill, and never gets loud, while the sound of the drums is oddly dull. This fantastic and elfish music seemed good to dance to. The old man was amusing, not dancing himself except in involuntary imitation as it were of his pupils, which imitation was spasmodic and very vigorous.

Then there was a contest between a mounted gardien with trident and a young bull. The bull charged the horse repeatedly, and was met by the trident. I saw a trident splintered by the shock. The gardien rode down the bull and bowled him over with a side jab on the quarters. Then he dismounted and tackled the bull with his bare hands. He seized him by the horns, man and beast shoving hard, shifted one hand to the muzzle and by twisting the beast's head sideways, threw him. He knelt on his head, and with a pocket-knife cut off a small piece of the ear. This performance seemed to represent the ferrade.

Later two gardiens entered the ring on foot with tridents, and received the repeated charges of a fierce full-grown bull on their tridents. They stood shoulder to shoulder and were entirely successful.

Then a kind of gallows was fixed in the arena, with a small ring dangling from it, and the gardiens tilted at this ring with a very curiously shaped short spear-thing : it had wooden wings on four sides like this :

We finished up with a *taureau pour le public*—Cocarde of twenty-five francs. A very fierce and active beast, who kept his cocarde-snatchers on the run for a very long time to the huge delight of the crowd. No one got the cocarde.

THE RHÔNE

Every visitor to Provence is struck by the majesty and the strength of the great River Rhône. As Mistral says, it is almost at its finest just before it runs into the dreary swamps and lagoons of the Camargue. It has had a long course. Its spring is right in the depths of the mountains from a group of great glaciers up on the cliffs of the Furka, and it begins as a humble little stream with its pale waters almost negligible at the bottom of its deep valley. The mists on

the mountain tops send down their tributaries to the little stream. It draws upon the Alps of Basle and the Pennines, and so is fed from the eternal snows. For a moment it stops, as we all know well, in the Lake of Leman, and then passes on its way already a majestic stream. It has its deep cañons of Belgare, where it is a foaming stream, and when it emerges it becomes quieter. At Lyons it is calm and broad. United to the Saône it makes its southern way, and already the vines are beginning to appear upon its sides, and when it reaches the district of Orange it is already in the south, and not long after it is a mighty stream as we know it at Avignon, running through the broken arches of the ancient bridge.

In the old days the small ships that sailed the Mediterranean could pass a long way up the Rhône. Marseille has long been a great seaport not far from its delta, and the Rhône is therefore on the great road of communication with the Mediterranean and to the east and the heart of France. The Roman roads followed, generally speaking, this route. That is why we find on the right and left of the road the great triumphal arches, the theatres, and the arenas. In the Middle Ages great castles began to grow on its banks and the heights which guarded it. It is still a great commerce route. It had its great fairs that were famous through the west of Europe. Now it has only its fishing boats. It is a river of the past, but it may yet play something of its old part once more. Already the canal of Marseille is making it possible to enter the river without passing through the shallow lagoons. If all is done that might be done, the Rhône will be the great link between the north of France and the Mediterranean. No wonder Mistral found in the great River Rhône one of his finest inspirations.

The Rhône bridges are of course sure to be interesting, even though it is a modern suspension bridge which Tartarin so much trembled to cross. Every one knows of the old bridge at Avignon and something of its history. But the finest remains of the old bridges is of course the Pont Saint Esprit not far from Viviers. It is only a little later than the famous bridge of Avignon and still has more than twenty arches. These bridges were built by the "bridge-building brothers," and they are responsible not only for these two bridges but for the two bridges at Montélimar, an

old bridge over the Isère, and others. At each end of the bridge there are fortifications and central towers to defend the work. In one of these towers is an altar to the saint of bridge-builders, St. Nicholas.

CHAPTER IV

ARLES

IT is most fortunate that the purpose of this work is to stimulate travellers to visit this charming bit of France, and that the stimulated will no doubt provide themselves with the ordinary tourist guide-books. Otherwise a complete book would need to be written on Arles: and a long one, too. Arles is the paradise of the antiquarian; indeed, a better view of Roman provincial life (on which I shall presently have something to say) can be got, I suppose, at Arles, Nîmes, Orange, than in any other three towns of Europe.[1] For my own part, Roman antiquities are my bread (the Greek are my butter or honey), and Arles supplied sustenance for long to come; but it was Provençal Arles which charmed, if it was Roman Arles which interested me. You have on the one hand the arena, the theatre, the forum, the Alyscamps, the Lapidary Museum, and a great deal else; on the other, the Museon Arlaten, the Musée Réattu (not to be despised, as some writers choose to do), St. Trophime, and the women of Arles with their Greek (for Greek they are, not Roman; though Mistral will not let us call them either)—their Greek features and carriage, and their beautiful simple dress and coif.[2]

The arena gains, in my humble judgment—I know others say otherwise—by its mediæval towers, as well as by the openness of its upper tiers, which gives a wonderful effect in moonlight.

The theatre is always beautiful: its lovely columns have both charm and pathos; of the Alyscamps, though plundered and ravaged, one can speak only with reverence—reverence for the dead, reverence for the footsteps of Dante. The

[1] Roman Arles is discussed in the section on Roman Gaul (ch. xvii).

[2] On this question see good articles in "En Provence," May and November, 1923. There are Greek names still about; many others must long ago have been translated into French forms; but there is still a Sophocles family at Fontvieille!

museum is a remarkable collection; for Christian tombs it has only one rival, and the antiquarian should study it most closely. One inscription puzzles me very much; it is to Calphurnia, daughter of Gaius Marius, "Conqueress of the Cimbri." I was not able to make proper investigation on the spot, and have concluded that this stone was possibly set up by Julius Cæsar in honour of his cousin.[1] But we are chiefly concerned with more modern aspects of Arles —and anyone who wants to know anything of Provence and Provençal ways must learn a great deal at Arles, and chiefly in Mistral's own Museum,[2] which is the best possible commentary upon his poems, especially "Mirèio." There the visitor will find everything of interest in Provençal life illustrated—most of the tickets and labels are in Mistral's own hand; he will find not only the little "Nativity scenes" in their glass cases, not only all sorts of lovely costumes and ribbons, but oh joy! the Tarasque itself, ghoulishly gaping among the charming examples of the arts of peace. One little incident riveted Arles for ever in my affections (if indeed such was needed); on arriving at Trinquetaille from Saintes-Maries we took a donkey-cart to convey our luggage to the main station. Returning after some days the first living being I met on emerging from the station was our donkey, who greeted me with a most cheerful braying welcome. I have always since then looked on Arles as my spiritual home (or one of them).

Admirers of Vincent van Gogh's works will go and look at the little yellow house where he lived for a time, and of which he speaks in his letters. The lines of the windows and rain pipes are a good deal straighter than in his picture in the Tate Gallery, but that, no doubt, is where Art comes in. It is a sad and sordid story of Van Gogh at Arles and St. Rémy; his St. Rémy pictures I am sorry not to have seen.

From Arles one naturally goes to see the fine ruin (and finely placed) of Montmajour: a double ruin, really; or rather, part a ruin, and part (the conventual buildings) left unfinished. Close by is the Chapel of the Holy Cross, of the twelfth century, with strange tombs about it, cut into the rock; they are said (but this is unlikely) to have been so

[1] Sir Theodore Cook, in "Old Provence," discusses many inscriptions, but not this one. The book (two volumes) is full and very well done.

[2] See remarks on this collection in chapter ii.

THE CANAL BRIDGE, ARLES

carved out for Saracen dead after a battle near by. Artists can spend a long time at Montmajour.

Arles, Nîmes, Orange, Fréjus—what a picture they give us of Roman provincial life! Everything provided for the comfort and amusement of the lords of creation; a theatre, an arena (at Orange they adjoin); baths, colonnades, market-places, and every single stone (I tried to estimate the cut stones in the theatre at Orange, but having no skill in logarithms, gave it up) cut, squared, carted, lifted into position by the sweated labour of the unhappy inhabitants. What reward for them to be permitted, when all was done, to see a gladiator or two, a few wild beasts, slaughtered before them! Could the waters carried in the great aqueducts taste sweeter for their toil than the springs of their native villages?

A great deal of foolish admiration has been wasted on these mighty Romans. They understood the arts of war; they built, they levelled, they linked up impossible places with unflinching roads; they carved out harbours right inland, that their boats need not rock at anchor; they wrote great histories and epics, full of noble sentiments; they civilized; they administered something like real justice; they taught an often lofty philosophy—and yet what can they have been to the poor natives of their great dominions but magnificently brutal?

Not far from Arles, by a rather dull road, one may reach the old Chapel of St. Gabriel; very ancient, and with nothing of special interest inside—at least I hope so, since after obtaining a massive key, like a property key in a music-hall, and struggling for many minutes, helped and encouraged by an old French tourist with a motor party, I had to give the mediæval lock the go-by. Strangely enough the same happened with the bit of the castle further up; and though both keys fitted their locks, I am inclined to think there was a catch somewhere.

This chapel is the scene of part of the story of Nerto, in Mistral's easiest poem for beginners in Provençal. There dwells the old hermit who is daily visited by St. Gabriel, and though with the angel's help he cannot save Nerto from her father's vow, he does save her—and her wicked ravisher is repentant at the last—from the Evil One.

At Arles we were fortunate enough to find again *Courses Libres de Taureaux* advertised—the more fortunate, as Nîmes had

disappointed us of a promised show by torrential rain all Sunday. At Arles it was very hot, and we had not the luxury of the Romans in the way of awnings; there were none.

A good crowd gathered for the opening at 3.0; the local *amateurs de tauromachie* profess to despise *Courses libres*, but still they draw. The admission price was cheap enough —two francs—and the band, of trumpets and drums, was quite a good one. Sharp at 3.0—how different from Spain, and more different from Portugal, where once they forgot to send the bulls!—a trumpeter blew a call—the band being successfully silenced—announcing the first bull. It was a course of six bulls, all named—one was Lou Félibre. They wore the cocarde, and each cocarde was worth fifty francs to the bold man who should snatch it.

Out rushed our bull, and most of the young *vie sportive* of Arles vaulted the barrier and rushed hither and thither in the arena, irritating him by waving their arms and shouting. Soon a second trumpet-blast sounded, and this was the signal for business; the cocarde-snatching was to begin. The cocarde is small, apparently about the size of a half-crown, hardly visible, indeed, from half-way up the tiers of seats. Sometimes it is fastened between the horns, and sometimes *sur le garrot* (on the shoulders). A serious snatcher takes with him a sort of comb which fits his hand and cuts, or helps to cut, the string which holds the cocarde.

One youth made something of a corner in cocardes—two or three hundred francs' worth—and his method was as follows: You approach the bull, unbeknown, from behind. When you get—if you do get—unobserved within three or four yards, you suddenly dash off at top speed and run forward alongside your bull; when about level with his head, you shout in his ear Ho! Ho! or words to that effect. The bull, rather scared and annoyed to find you suddenly so near, at once goes for you in the most serious manner. While you are both running as hard as you can, you reach behind, with subtlety, your right hand and comb off the cocarde from between the horns. Then you vault over the fence, with the bull—if you are really skilful and lucky—a good two inches behind you.

When the cocarde is well and truly bagged, the trumpet blows again, and the bull is invited to leave the arena. The first bull did so like a little gentleman, waiting quietly while

the gate was opened for him. But later bulls were not so docile, and usually a decoy with a bell round its neck has to be sent in to lead the bull out.

The amateur cocarde-snatcher wears a white tennis shirt and trousers with a belt or red sash. A dog appeared in the ring at one stage, attracted the attention of the bull, and disappeared swiftly.

Everywhere about people produced their nosebags and got through refreshments, liquid and solid; some were sold in the place. Where the original seats had disappeared, people set tables and forms, and a family would take a table and eat its mid-afternoon meal in much comfort. We only saw a few English visitors.

A first-aid department was visible, marked *Pharmacie*, but no one was injured this time.

In this short account of Arles, we have ventured to assert that the Arles "type," as seen at least in its women, is not Roman but Greek. But is there any historical trace of the Greek influence at Arles—an influence strong enough to outlast the Roman occupation, which has certainly left its very obvious traces on the city itself?[1] History must go partly, at least, by guess-work. Legends may help, if we use them carefully; and there is, of course, the ancient tale which weds the leader of the Phocean colony at Marseille to the daughter of an Arlesian chieftain. Vines and olives are said to have been planted round about Arles, imported direct from Greece.

But is this all? M. Armand Dauphin tells us that by careful search among the inscriptions from the Alyscamps, he has found several Greek names, and that moreover Greek Christian names still occur, and recur, at Arles. Greek place names survive; the mighty Rhône itself has a name which in shape and form is certainly Greek. Arles and its neighbourhood have a good deal in common with Attica, and Greeks would certainly have found near Arles a "home from home."[2]

M. Dauphin finds in the Arlésiens of to-day many similarities with the Greeks of old days. This finding of likenesses is a will-o'-the-wisp which has led many good men astray; but he is on safer ground in finding Greek traces in the Arlésien's love of festivals, possibly (as suggested elsewhere) in the

[1] "En Provence" for May, 1923.

[2] The Amphitheatre is thought to show Greek influence on its architectural features. The Theatre certainly does.

Provençal bull-fights, and in the Farandole, if not in other Provençal dances; as to Arlésien dress, it is difficult to see here Greek influence except—it is true—in the simplicity and grace which are common to the Arlésienne and to the delicate figures on Greek vases; as to the melodious Arlésien speech, it may indeed retain some echo of the great race to whom ordinary speech was an art.

The traveller must judge for himself. Of one thing he will soon be certain, that Arles stands by itself in Western Provence. It has an aloofness that makes its chief charm. Is it then, perhaps, as M. Dauphin concludes, a Greek city in the midst of Roman Gaul?

The "Alyscamps"

It is here that we find Arles standing alone among the cities of Roman Gaul. As on the Appian, so on the Aurelian Way, the Roman sets his tombs, which would here and there branch off also, from the great ways, when a convenient level offered itself. The Alyscamps ran along a rocky level called "Mouleyres," and the tombs, as the space grew occupied, began to wander irregularly over neighbouring fields. At first, of course, pagan, the cemetery was little by little, from a very early date, invaded by Christian tombs, which seems to suggest that Christian members of the great families would not be divided in death from their unconverted kin. Soon came little churches and funeral chapels; legend placed among the tombs those of famous heroes; and to be buried in the Alyscamps must have been the living ambition of all the more notable people of Provence, insomuch that the Rhône itself became a great funeral way and the dead floated down, till a miraculous backwater washed them to the shore for burial.

To-day we see only a fragment of what once was there. Many fine sarcophagi are now placed (perhaps quite rightly) in museums. We can trace three distinct parts of the long avenue, one beginning with the railway (but it began farther back originally); the second part begins with the Chapel of Accase de la Tour, a knight killed in a duel; the third portion begins at the (late) "Monument of the Consuls." Most of the present tombs are pagan, for the reason we have given. At the end is the Romanesque church of St. Honorat. Some tombs have remained as they were; some lie open; some have sunk deep into the ground.

Anyone who likes may suggest a derivation of the word Alyscamps. It is next to certain that camps means campi, champs, however little the word may be suggested by the straight alley on the rocky level. The word is natural enough of a cemetery. But it is very difficult, from Alys, to get "Elysian," and we do not meet such an expression elsewhere of a cemetery or avenue of tombs. We may call a cemetery "God's acre," but we should hardly call it "heavenly fields." May the first part be Greek? "Alusis" is "grief," "anguish." If the place was used by the old Greeks for burial, they might well have called it the Fields (or the Place) of Sorrowing; the first part of the name remaining, the Romans might well form the hybrid, the "Fields" (campi) of Sorrow.

The legend of the miraculous backwater of the Rhône clears up a disputed line of Dante,[1] who speaks of Arles and the Alyscamps *ove 'l Rodano stagna.* Now Dante was often put to it for a rhyme; but one of the astounding things in many astounding things in Dante is that very few of his final words are weak ones and that he seldom uses a colourless word when he can get a telling one, so that we must always press, or at least test, his language to the full.

Critics may dispute whether Dante had been to Arles or not. This line does not weigh one side or the other. Had Dante known the rushing Rhône at Arles, he still might have used the expression, since it was an ancient tradition that no floating coffin ever passed the "Roquette," but, despite the force of the current, "wound somehow safe" to shore.

But because Dante recalls tradition, and because his other Provençal references are literary, we need not rule out his possible passage along the Provençal coast.

[1] See Jean Dayre in "En Provence," June 1924.

CHAPTER V

ST. RÉMY AND LES BAUX

ST. RÉMY

ST. RÉMY has a charm of its own. Its little Plateau of the Antiquities, especially with the lights of the setting sun upon it, is one of the most pleasing spots in this corner of Provence. The antiquities themselves—the arch and the "Mausoleum"—are dignified. From these two relics one tries to reconstruct the Roman city or settlement upon the hill, never very extensive, but probably very neat and compact. The arch has the familiar figures of captives; *væ victis* is written all over Roman Gaul, though, likely enough, when the conquerors had got all they wanted, the wealthier provincials (if any were left wealthy) might themselves reap the doubtful fruits of Roman civilization. One is pleased to see the bold bearing of one of the captives.

The town has not much of interest except a fine old church and some charming "old bits" in the inner streets. It has a comfortable hotel and an honest proprietor.

We were fortunate to have as fellow-visitors the caste of the famous Marseille Pastorale, which we saw from beginning to end, after dining among odd-looking half-made-up people, with whiskers on one side, irregular eyebrows, and dappled complexions. They all got finished in time for the curtain, with not a wig awry; and when my heart was warmed towards Barthoumieou and the Mayor—*Lou Mairo*—the butt of half the jokes, I regretted I had not clasped these worthies by the hand. But they did not breakfast in public.

Reference has already been made to this strange Pastorale. It is mostly buffoonery—and good buffoonery. There is a Plautine touch about much of the by-play and the jokes, and no doubt it ultimately harks back, as does Plautus, to the Greeks. But now it is completely Provençalized. Pretty well everything Provençal comes in somewhere. It is anachronistic to the last degree, in fact, the oddest

possible jumble of folk-lore, farce, and religion. No one should miss it.

St. Rémy has a special interest as the abode of Gounod during the writing of his opera "Mireille." Such music as I have heard from the opera does not suggest exactly the music of Provence, but rather of modern France (beautiful enough), but Gounod chose a good centre for local colour and atmosphere, and Maillane, of course, is handy by.

By the "Antiquities" is an old monastery, now an Asylum. Here Van Gogh was interned, and here he painted. We visited the Asylum, its fine cloisters, and its Church; a mad girl over the high wall was droning scraps of old Provençal melodies; it was quaint and sad. It brought back to mind a visit during the Great War to a distant spot in Italian mountains, where the only dwellers in the lonely hotel were a young girl and an old duenna. It was clear, as we lunched together under the trellis, that the girl, pretty and vivacious, was yet *alienée*. After lunch she went up to her room and from the window sang, in an utterly charming voice, a Sicilian melody, then popular, very beautiful and sad. I hear it still in my dreams.

At St. Rémy we were favoured with a sight of the great Fair of the 25th of April: it is the usual fair much magnified, and includes horses, sheep, goats and so on. It is at St. Rémy that the great hill-climbing contest, the "Course de Côte des Alpilles" is held for cars and motor-bicycles: they rush past the Plateau des Antiquités, and while the Illustrator was drawing, these cars were roaring and leaping up the road between him and his object. There was one accident: a big racing car coming round an S corner ran right off the road, turned over, and went into the rocky side of a cutting, covered in a cloud of dust. Suspense and anxiety: had they raced their last? No! a cry arose: "Ne sont pas morts!" and soon they got up and brushed the dust from their sleeves.

Many are the troubles of the artist. A kind old woman who would take no refusal was touched to see Monsieur standing in a street, and gave him a chair. As the work was in progress, and the new posture altered all the perspective, this was rather a blow. Still, toujours la politesse! The rest had to be done by cooking the perspective or by jumping up when the old dame wasn't looking.

LES BAUX

Les Baux needs a Dante to describe it, a Michael Angelo to paint it. We regret that neither of these has been able to collaborate with us.[1]

Others, however, have done their best. Mistral's picture of Les Baux in "Calendau" is fine enough. Travellers have risen to the occasion.

Les Baux was originally Gaulish, and acquired its importance as a stronghold during the raids of the Saracens in the tenth century. It was no doubt its security which made it one of the richest lordships in the south of France, and in the twelfth century the lords of Les Baux possessed nearly eighty different properties. It was at Les Baux that they used to hold the great Courts of Love, and the barons of Les Baux had, at one time or another, magnificent titles varying from Kings of Arles to Emperors of Constantinople. The downfall of Les Baux dates from when Barral sold the Republic of Arles to Charles d'Anjou. A sort of retribution seems to have settled upon the place, and the town gradually lost its population. The old castle is of course built, as much of the old town was, by cutting out great blocks from the neighbouring hillsides and piling them upon the natural rocks which served as foundations. One almost might say that they cut out the rocks from the interior to form their rooms, and threw them up as the walls and fortifications. Many rooms in Les Baux of to-day are actually cut out of the rocks. The castle is quite impossible to describe as it is now, and not at all easy to represent by sketches or painting. Towers support themselves almost like trees that have fallen against some great boulder and hang, as it were, by their own balance. Probably Les Baux will never be anything again but an attraction for the tourist. The houses have, indeed, as Dumas said, been built upon the rocks, but they have crumbled all the same.

The Counts of Les Baux were the great feudal nobles of the Middle Ages, and they are always recurring in the history of Southern France. Their court was the great centre of the troubadours, and Mistral, in "Calendau," gives a very vivid

[1] Though it may well be that Dante found here his idea of the topography of Hell. There is certainly a resemblance between the wild rock scenery of Les Baux and his description. One curious amphitheatre of rocks is called "The Vale of Hell."

THE CASTLE, LES BAUX

description of some of the orgies that one may imagine to have taken place in the castle of the old days. There were indeed many poets who were bitterly hostile to the court of Les Baux, but the attraction of patronage was too much for a great part of them, and even many of the princes of the great house were themselves poets. Of the princesses of Les Baux we know some by name, notably Cécile, who was called Passerose. But unhappily the story of Les Baux is very largely one of slaughter and massacre with fire and sword. One finds in the history of Les Baux the utmost splendour of savagery.

Any ruined town has a special grip upon us: but when it is full of memories of mighty counts, fierce robbers, beautiful princesses, it enters more into romance than history.

At present it is a sad and moving wreck. Few indeed are its inhabitants, and few would want to dwell a winter through in that wind-swept height. The rock-cut chambers must be fairly snug, but despite their mediæval feeling they are rather dreary.[1] You cannot well be merry at Les Baux. It is not exactly a city of the dead but it is a Rip van Winkle of cities, only just rubbing its long-sealed eyes, as tourists roll up its steep winding road and rouse its long lethargy. It would be a pleasure—a melancholy pleasure—to stay some time there, and be on terms with all the inhabitants. One house I entered, and found an old man and an old woman fronting each other in the corners of their great chimney. The old man was almost sitting in the fire; and so he sat—as he told me—the whole winter through. The married daughter, a handsome girl, who came in later on, had taken part in the great "Mireille" film; she might well have presented Mireille herself. We drank coffee and ate *fougasse* and little black olives. It was (forgive the obvious) like a Dutch interior. The old folk lived there because it was their hearth and home; nobody lived there who need not. The daughter was married to a little proprietor in the valley, a hunter of wild boars. They were kind, sad people; they did not want our little gifts; they had not learnt tourist-hunting, though the old woman had, it is true, a little stall of picture postcards. They seemed appropriate; themselves almost in ruin, almost abandoned. I shall not forget their chimney corner, the gipsy kettle

[1] We slept in such—a dépendance of one of the hôtels. The waiter was a French Sam Weller who said, "Vi, monsieur!"

swung over the embers, ready to warm the chill veins of the greyhead.

Walks in the valley are weird and fascinating. The show places are the Pavilion of Queen Jeanne, three figures cut in the rock, the "Vale of Hell," and the Fairy Grot—this last an uninviting cavern; it is best to read of it in Mistral and study its section drawings in the Museon Arlaten. Like many tourists I have the ill habit of carrying off a root or two from the country in which I spend my annual holiday. I have carried back, in sponge-bag after sponge-bag, heaths, odd rock flowers, all kinds of things from all sorts of odd places; one batch from an Austrian battlefield, littered with cartridges, tin helmets, and all the sordid refuse of war; near by was a cemetery where Austrians and Italians slept together *in pace*. Not one of those has grown; but a few poor scrubby oddments plucked from the Valley of Hell have taken root and are growing strongly! My only success!

The quarries of Les Baux save one the toil of visiting the Tomb of Tutankh-amen: with their great square supporting pillars left, and stretching away into a dark and uncanny distance, they suggest some rectangular-columned Philæ. It seems such a pity and such an irony of things that with everything to make house-building easy and inexpensive, nobody wants to live near the place. The great stone blocks are carted miles away.

I was pointed out a ruined dwelling of some famous executioner; not Sanson, evidently, but one Jean Coupe-Tête. I could not, however, identify him, having had little acquaintance with his kind. But it seemed the right spot for him to have lived—quite close to Hell Vale.

It is a pleasant walk from St. Rémy to Les Baux; and a rather dull one, with interesting bits, from Les Baux to Arles. You pass Fontvieille, where you may search for Daudet's mill, and perhaps call on the Sophocles family. I deeply regret that I did the first and not also the second.

You pass, also, a monument to some one killed at a level-crossing. I often used to wonder why all Nativity Cribs in the churches did not catch fire, and why most people in France were not killed at level-crossings: the answer is, they do and they are.

The side of St. Gilles Church was blackened with smoke from its burned crèche, and the stone head of an angel of light up above had turned into the head of an angel of darkness.

Not only the monument put me right on the other point, but at a further crossing I found the actual wreck of a motor-lorry which had charged a line of waggons. This ought to happen always; it does happen sometimes.

CHAPTER VI

TARASCON, BEAUCAIRE, NÎMES, ST. GILLES, CARCASSONNE, NARBONNE

CLEARLY one thought above all fills the visitor at Tarascon. He looks along the little narrow streets of the old town, and realizes how very expedient it is, even to-day, to walk well in the middle—he speers about for a likely spot for the menagerie to camp, and he views with a proper terror the cable bridge over to Beaucaire which poor Tartarin crossed once, alas ! and never to return.

The people of Tarascon may use this hero, forced upon them by an over-brilliant genius, to the discomforting of the tourist ; they do, in fact, sell picture postcards of Tartarin and of Costecalde, of the cap-shooting and Alpille-climbing expeditions, and they also make a pleasant sweetmeat called a " Tartarinade." But we can quite understand the story of the poor commercial traveller who, through " an unfortunate homonym," or as a joke, signed himself " A. Daudet " at his hotel, and only by precipitate flight saved himself from a ducking in the Rhône—not to say in the dirtier canal.

But now, visitors, laugh if you will, but laugh elsewhere. As you come from the station (which takes a good deal of getting out of : you dive underground in the central platform) you come face to face with a simple and dignified monument inscribed *Aux enfants de Tarascon.*

Of the numerous war memorials I have seen—our tomb-like slabs and pagan-looking obelisks in England, the patient stone *poilus* of France, the fierce, unrepentant warriors charging " over the top " in Austria—and possibly in Germany also—none moved me more than this one.

Formerly you opened your lips to a grin as you entered Tarascon ; now you must take off your hat.

Apart from Tartarin, in whom were certainly some saint-like qualities, Tarascon is dominated by St. Martha. The story of St. Martha (of Bethany) will fall into place when we come to Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer. Higher critics tell us

that this charming legend of the Three Maries with Martha and other evangelists is really a backwash of the stories of the great Caius Marius. This explanation, ingeniously worked out by Sir Theodore Cook,[1] is very plausible at first, but is not so good when you get down to details. At all events we must not give up the Tarasque, from whose outrageous appetite for young persons St. Martha delivered the town. "Higher criticism" has an even easier task with the Tarasque than with other Provençal legends; it can be traced back with the utmost ease through a little series of fabulous monsters in wood or stone to a kind of fantastic bear concocted from travellers' tales. At any rate the Tarasque as you see him in the Arles museum is a charming monster, half gollywog, half Aunt Sally. We refuse to give him up.

St. Martha has left a very visible memorial of herself or her legend in the church. Next to the statue of St. Joan, standing solitary and triumphant at the end of Orleans Cathedral, the tomb and effigy of St. Martha of Tarascon impressed me most. Entering the dim church towards evening, I stumbled on a stair and groped my way down into a dark crypt, at the far end of which glimmered a single penny candle, by whose faint light I could see the recessed tomb on the side wall, and in the apse of the crypt, the most serene marble face that sculptor ever wrought: the face of her who was given to "much fussing"—a woman with puckered brow and hunted eyes—but now pictured in death as of more than earthly serenity, of sublime and celestial repose. Above her is the legend *Sollicita non turbatur*—which, I take it, means: "She, who once was harassed with many things, is now at peace."

BEAUCAIRE

One can rather soon exhaust, or seem to exhaust, Tarascon, though it forms one of the best excursion centres in Provence. But there is always Beaucaire, over the Rhône, if you have courage to cross. The castle of Beaucaire scowls at the castle of King René, which is not (so far as I could find) open to visitors without various curious kinds of permits.

Beaucaire has no Tartarin, but it is yet more famous than its sister town in literary glory: it was the home of Aucassins and Nicolete, hero and heroine of that charming prose-poem-idyll, so recently known to us from the note of Walter Pater

[1] "Old Provence."

and the admirable rendering of Bourdillon. Beaucaire was also famed for its great fair, of which Mistral gives a wonderful account in his Poème du Rhône. With its canal, its perched-up castle ruins, and its old little streets, it is really more picturesque than Tarascon : certainly it has some magnificent houses : and much study may be put into Provençal doors and doorways, with Beaucaire, Aix, and Villeneuve-lès-Avignon as chief centres.

THE TARASQUE [1]

As every one who goes to Tarascon must add to his affection of the great Tartarin a like affection for the Tarasque, it may be worth while also to trace something of the natural history of the once cruel, now gentle (yet not beauteous) monster. This can be done in part in the Arles Museum, but further study will also help. Nearly all "fabulous monsters" were the embroideries of genuine travellers' tales. Not quite all. We cannot regard as anything but a "leg-pull" some of the curiosities of Mandeville, for instance ; the men of one foot, but that so large that it could be used as a parasol, the owner lying on his back, cannot be reduced to any sort of orderly "embroidery." The Tarasque, however, is easier to trace. It may have arisen from some peculiarly shaggy and odd-looking bear, but it may equally be a dim recollection, handed down in tradition, and losing nothing in the handing, of some harmless but awkward-looking dinosaur. Its rather human face—for it has something of a man's look about it—may have arisen from a confusion of the ravaging monster with the popular imaginative picture of the demons who devour the soul, and it bears some resemblance to the nastier demons seen in old wall paintings of the Last Judgment.

Something has already been said about the Festival of the Tarasque, which is traditionally ascribed to King René. The festival, as is well known, was revived by Mistral on its old lines, and was held with all possible ceremony in 1861. It may be of interest to have something of the story of the procession put on paper.

First, on the Sunday before Ascension, the procession, with the Order of the Knights of the Tarasque leading, must go up to the mountain where is the old statue of Our Lady

[1] A further discussion of these local monsters is given below, ch. xviii.

of the Castle. They go slowly, but they must come back at full speed. To this belongs an ancient story that one year the good people of Tarascon had forgotten to go and bring the statue of Our Lady into the town. The day of the festival arrived; two carters with their heavy carts were coming back to Tarascon; an old woman hails them; one tells her to walk on, for he has already a load enough; the other at once gives her a lift. A terrible storm comes on in which the one cart is drenched and the other remains dry. The kind carter looks back and finds that it is Our Lady herself who is seated in his cart. The people had forgotten, but she had not.

All the neighbouring towns and villages turn out to see the arrival. They come from St. Rémy, from Maillane, from Boulbon, and elsewhere. The bargemen from the Rhône are all there, and the statue is taken into the church with noise of guns and drums and pipes. Nothing more happens until Ascension Day, and then the Abbé is solemnly elected. It is on the morning of Ascension Day that the Tarasque is taken out for the first time, but this is only for a trial trip. On Whit-Sunday there is a great feast.

It is suggested that King René planned all this in order to get rid of the natural jealousies which arise in little towns. He arranged, therefore, that there should be a good deal of feasting and festivity to bring the people together.

Then follows the benediction of the banner. This is quite a fine sight in itself. Here is a chance for the girls of Tarascon, Beaucaire, and elsewhere to show off their finery; they surround the great church of St. Martha. After Vespers comes the Bravade, of which we have given an account elsewhere, and in the evening they all go home to the light of torches. On Whit-Monday every one is dressed in garment of ceremony, a very smart garment indeed: white shirt with red lace on the edge of the sleeves and at the collar, red knee-breeches, white silk stockings, and white boots picked out with red, and grey hat with a red plume, red rosettes on the shirt and in the hat, and a long sort of sash of red with a silver buckle on which is represented the Tarasque. The procession moves off to the church, where Mass is celebrated. The youngest and the oldest of the cavaliers are servers at the Mass. The bearer of the pike and banner are on either side of the altar. Special music, which has fortunately been published, is played by the organ.

After Mass comes the parade. It is here where St. Martha is represented by one of the girls of Tarascon dressed in white but with a blue veil. She has a vessel of holy water in her hands, and leads the Tarasque by a silk thread. It is after this that the fun becomes loud and furious, and all sorts of buffoonery and horse-play are practised upon the spectators. There is a symbolical representation of the planting of the vine—some ancient recollection no doubt from the worship of Bacchus. Shepherds march in procession with a tableau of the Holy Family in their midst; the porters come along with St. Christopher among them bearing the Child Jesus; the gardeners follow with all sorts of lovely flowers upon their chariot. Then there is fun again. There is a "game of the sturgeon," and there are dances. The last of all the processions is that of St. Sebastian, who is the patron saint of the young. With that this interesting and charming, but no doubt rather wild, festival used to come to its appointed end.

NÎMES

For Nîmes, I am reminded of the story of the Eastern mother of St. Thomas à Becket, who is said to have travelled across Europe to find her lover with two words of English, "Gilbert" and "London." This achievement, very nearly paralleled in the admirable service of our Post Office—I may say that I have received a foreign letter addressed merely to my county—can almost be repeated at Nîmes: in fact you only need remember one word, *Blanc*; go to the Cheval Blanc and call for *vin blanc*. Then go forth and see the most wonderful town of Roman Gaul. The arena is not spoiled as some think that of Arles is spoiled, by mediæval towers, and it stands gloriously alone. The Maison Carrée is really good Græco-Roman work (of which there is so much bad) and the baths and little Temple are particularly charming and picturesque, made more so by the terraced garden which the City Fathers have arranged so neatly as a background.

Then there is the Tour Magne, a grim and solitary sentinel—but for what, or against whom, we do not exactly know.

With infinite labour to command, and abundant stone, our all-conquering Romans seem to have erected great buildings on small provocation. Somebody said: "Let there be a tower, an aqueduct, an arch," and before long there was one.

Nîmes is the place to begin a study of Roman Gaul.[1]

[1] Roman Nîmes is discussed in chapter xvii.

THE TOUR MAGNE, NÎMES

It is a great pity our schools, whether for boys or girls, do not do more in organizing holiday tours to these very accessible places in Provence—which really give one a better idea of Roman work and civilization than Rome itself.

Of Nîmes of to-day we saw a good deal also, but missed a *mise à mort* which was advertised as imminent. This is the Spanish bull-fight, the whole, and nothing but it. The local bulls are not judged fierce enough, evidently. Three famous espadas were announced with their cuadrillas. It was expensive; best seats 90 francs. Auto-cars were run from all round, and the advertisements, on huge posters with a highly-coloured bull at the top, headed "Plaza de Toros, Nîmes," were to be seen in Arles, St. Rémy, and elsewhere. All the bull-fighting clubs for many miles round announced special meetings at which members subscribed for tickets.

One or two general words about bull-fights. It is not very cruel to the bull, even at the *Mise à mort*: less cruel, I think, than we are to foxes, otters, and even badgers. The lances and banderillas worry him, but probably in the heat of the fight he does not feel their wounds keenly, and his death must be swift and merciful, or the crowd will know the reason why. Still, the complete Spanish bull-fight is indefensible, if only by reason of cruelty to the horses. The Portuguese and Provençal type give every scope for skill and courage, and provide plenty of thrills.

The solemnity of the ceremonial lends some likelihood to the idea that the bull-fight is descended from Crete, where it had a solemn religious significance. The bull was to die in his might, and then his might would pass to the slayer, and through him into the people at large.

It really looks as if there were something in the theory.

I have not dwelt upon the later history of Nîmes, but every one knows it was the great centre of persecution of the Huguenots, together with Beaucaire and Les Baux. The story of this persecution is gloomy enough, and we must try as far as possible to forget the miseries that came upon the happy land of the troubadours.

THE PONT DU GARD

The Pont du Gard is usually approached by car or train from Nîmes, though it can equally be reached (as already

suggested) from Avignon (Gare du Pont d'Avignon), getting out by either route at Remoulins and walking or driving three and a half kilometres. It can conveniently be viewed by car, as the road crosses it.

On leaving Remoulins, one goes over a rather primitive, or at any rate simple suspension bridge, and eventually passes a good-sized hotel (where I had a very good lunch) just before reaching the Pont. You reach it up-stream, and there is no view of it, from the road at any rate, till you have passed beneath it and looked back at it down-stream. There is an obliging little notice which tells you that to obtain the best view it is necessary to go up the river a bit, and then scramble down the bank on to some rocks which project into the stream. The view from there is certainly a good one, but another at least as good is to be found by ascending the path which climbs the valley-side on the right bank from the road to the level of the conduit : half-way up, the Pont is seen to great advantage. I should imagine it would look very well from much higher up the valley, but cannot say from experience.

The arches are of unequal width, a thing which does not strike one at once : no doubt to this is due much of its charm : it is very subtly irregular. The builders left stones projecting at frequent intervals, apparently for convenience in erecting scaffoldings for repairs. Originally there was only the aqueduct, the actual " pont " was added in 1745.

By climbing up to the level of the conduit, it is possible to walk right through the structure from end to end ; only the conduit does not quite reach the hill-side on the left bank, and steps have been provided in modern times leading down the broken end of the aqueduct.

A very remarkable feature is the astonishing thickness of the stony deposit left by the water ; the channel is lined by slabs many inches thick. It is even said that some houses and a church in the neighbourhood are built of this deposit, but I did not verify this. There would be quite enough for this : the stuff is missing in many places in the conduit, and of course the channel on both sides of the " pont " on and in the hill-side would provide any amount. I investigated the course of the channel on the right bank only, where there is a goodish tunnel and a good deal of open channel, and did not notice any deposit there.

There is a fine view of the valley to be had by climbing

up and thrusting your head out of the conduit midway across where the roof is missing, as it is in many places.

ST. GILLES

The façade of St. Gilles is well known to be one of the finest in all France. It is fitted between two little towers, and is approached by steps that stretch along its whole length. It has three round arches for its entrances. In the middle of the great door stands a fluted pillar, and on the other side of the centre door is a magnificent arrangement of detached columns, of which the column of St. Trophime at Arles is a copy, but an inferior one. The central tympanum shows Christ in glory ; that on the southern door shows the Crucifixion. The frieze shows three carvings of the life of our Lord, and this frieze is magnificently designed and magnificently executed. One can follow it through a regular compendium of the Gospel story. On the wall behind the columns are the Twelve Apostles, and then above the central door are carvings in low relief. One sees David playing on his harp, David slaying Goliath, strange representations of monkeys, a camel, a lion, and Balaam's ass. There are wonderful medallions with centaurs, stags and lionesses, and beneath the feet of the Apostles are found, as we so often find them, lions to represent the heresies upon which they tread. Every one should go and see the wonderful staircase of St. Gilles, called St. Giles' screw, which is considered to be a very wonderful piece of masonry. It is indeed a very remarkable example of the vaulting of a spiral stair.

St. Gilles does not take long to describe, but it is worth a long stay to the artist or antiquarian. The west porch of its church is (as is well known) much finer than that of St. Trophime at Arles ; and that is saying a great deal. Its crypt and the ruins of the old choir are also of great interest ; there is the famous staircase of the twelfth century ; and in the crypt is the tomb of that gentle saint, Egidius, of whom, and of his tame hind, the legends are so charming and idyllic. There is also a glorious Romanesque house at St. Gilles—altogether a very striking little place, and not to be missed on any account.

CARCASSONNE

Carcassonne is not strictly in Provence, but it is so wonderful that no one must give it the go-by, even if it means going

a little off the usual track. As restored by Viollet-le-Duc, it gives us a great mediæval fortified city exactly as it was—save that a newer race dwells in it now, and that boiling oil and melted lead are no longer poured on the head of the visitor toiling up to the Aude gate. It should be approached from the town, so that as you reach the river the full splendour of it bursts upon you. It is so complete that it almost suggests a stage or cinema setting ; but there is no cardboard here ; Romans, Visigoths, men of later age, have all piled stone on stone and towers and turrets on massive walls. The thing looks, in fact, overdone : but its history is its excuse.

In the cité is a fine Basilica, with a fifth-century crypt, round Romanesque aisles, and glorious thirteenth-century glass, alone worth a long travel to see. One does not meet much thirteenth-century glass. For me it has the same effect which beautiful music in King's College Chapel had on Charles Darwin—it sends a "queer rippling feeling" down my back.

I found it best to stay in the town, where one did not pay for gold lace, but was very comfortable. Auter's is, of course, a celebrated Southern restaurant and deserves its fame. Carcassonne of to-day was holding a Rugby festival, and conspicuous among its fifteen was a celebrated International ; so the old bulldog breed holds. There were other mild amusements, and as this visit was my first introduction to the troubadour country I tinged, no doubt, everything with rose-colour. Two roof-cats which kept me awake yet seemed to have sweeter tones than ours ; but a Philistine threw a boot and the rest was silence.

In the morning I was re-awakened by the gleeful chattering of children ; some shop below was distributing free pictures. I dressed in haste and went and got one. In the market I tried to buy a coloured blanket ; but I found I had to buy the entire bed-furniture along with it, and retired.

Perhaps some special description of the city may be of use to the traveller, though he will be wise if he wants to understand this wonderful Middle Age relic to get a special guide, and also to study the work of Monsieur Viollet-le-Duc. There he will find full plans and full descriptions of every kind, in fact a short compendium by the chief expert and restorer of the entire city.

The need of a great fortified city at Carcassonne arises

from its position. From the earliest time it lay on a fairway of all the great invasions of Southern France, and it was near enough to the Pyrenees and also the Rhône to attract the attacks from either side of all that came raiding by. There were of course the Vandals, the Visigoths, the Moors and the Normans, all of whom have left their traces, and built upon the work which the Romans had started. The position was an inviting one. The River Aude makes here an elbow bend, and no one with any idea of fortification could let so fine a site go by. It has its double set of walls, the outer being heavier and lower than that within, and perhaps it is this which gives the city so remarkable an appearance when seen from a distance, and certainly it is this which makes it so much finer than other walled cities such as Avila in Spain. Between the outer and inner walls are the lices, the great open spaces to enable the defenders to pass from point to point. It is worth some study to see how carefully everything was thought out. If the troops could not move from this point to that by reason of the enemy's fire, there were inner ways or even passages, so that they never could be wholly headed off from the point where their presence was most needed. Once within the outer fortifications an enemy still had a great deal to do before he could make a breach in the inner walls. They were less massive, as we have seen, than the outer, but they are heavy enough, and the defences and towers of the inner walls are more frequent.

Supposing even the second wall was broken through, there yet remained the supreme refuge of the inhabitants in the castle, a third or inner fortress. There was strictly only one gate to the city, for the gate of the Aude was merely a postern, and both entrances were strongly protected, both as they reached the walls and also as they climbed the slope.

If ever it was worth while to go through a place in tourist fashion with guide-book and study every small point of the way, it is in the fortifications of Carcassonne. Every bastion, every tower, fills its place, the angle of the wall, back a little here, forward a little there, is not only caused by the lie of the land but calculated so that the maximum of defensive power should be given to each portion. There was to be no weakest point. The guide-books carefully number the little towers of the inner ramparts as well as the greater ones of the outer fortification, and it is possible to take them

one by one following through their names, but a special study of Middle Ages fortifications is necessary before we can really appreciate to the full the massiveness of this great fortress.

The general appearance of the city is now rather spoiled by the building of a new hotel which breaks the line of the ramparts, but otherwise nothing is spoiled, and those who may be inclined to speak of over-restoration ought really to be only too thankful that the great city has been restored at all. We have only to enter one of its gates and we are straight in the Middle Ages with hardly a single sight to jar upon us except a modern touch in the interior buildings here and there.

Very regretfully I left Carcassonne, and in a sympathetic train, for it was very late, I reflected what disasters must follow if French trains one day ran all to time. This one being quite safe took me to Narbonne, not far from the first seaport of Roman Gaul—the counterpoise to the mighty Marseille. On the canal is quite a Venetian touch in the grouping of the old houses, and the choir of the Cathedral, almost as tall as Beauvais, is a joy for ever. Had they built on in proportion—and rash people have tried—there would have been no Narbonne left.

Narbonne is a friendly-disposed city and they evidently live together in unity. It was hard to find a lunch place, so I tried a café, which explained that it *could* do it, but that we were better advised to go to such a place, in a little courtyard. There indeed we lunched well, with good bouillabaisse, but when we called for coffee they replied that they *could* do it, but that we were better advised to go to the café whence we had set forth.

When I admired this interchange of courtesies they replied, "Oh, we are all friends together in Narbonne!"—Yes, and certainly not rogues together; they were kindly and honest people.

MAGUELONE

Montpellier has no great interest, though at one time it was a well-known centre for English people, but not far away is the fascinating town of Maguelone. It was full of antiquities, but was destroyed completely in 737 by Charles Martel as being too convenient a refuge for the invading Arabs.

Little is left of what was called in those days Port Saracen. For three centuries Maguelone remained a desert. In the eleventh century its bishop decided to rebuild it, and rebuilt it was, with the ramparts, towers and a great dyke running down to the water's edge. The old entry was barred lest the pirates should use it again, but Maguelone remained undisturbed, a little episcopal town, rich, prosperous and charitable. Its cathedral had a great wall about it, and one only entered it across a drawbridge. It was built of a special strength to resist all warlike attacks. Louis XIII had its fortifications destroyed, and now there is little left save its ancient cathedral surrounded by palms and oleanders. Once a centre of violence and warfare, it has now become a haunt of ancient peace.

CHAPTER VII

THE CAMARGUE, AIGUES-MORTES, SAINTES-MARIES DE LA MER

THE Camargue[1] is a wonderful salt delta, with big lakes, enclosed by the Greater and Little Rhône. Sometimes it is hard to realize one is in Europe. The delta, with its wild black oxen and white horses, suggests some western pampas, while its birds, chiefly its flamingoes, in the summer time, must remind us rather of Egypt. Certainly it is a unique part of France, and breeds unique men, women, oxen, and horses. There is, I suppose, hardly a finer type in Europe than the "gardien," young or old, mounted trident in hand on his white Camargue horse—rather stubby, and rather stupid-looking, but equal to every endurance, and perfectly trained to round up the black cattle of the marsh-lands; there is hardly a more beautiful or graceful woman than his sister, sweetheart, or wife, who sits behind him on the crupper.

The encircling arms of the Rhône are no longer the swift stream of Avignon and Tarascon. Rhône, like a wearied greybeard, as Mistral puts it, shrinks from his approaching end, when he shall merge his being and name in the limitless sea; he moves slowly and reluctantly, looking back upon the jousts and junketings of Avignon.

The plain enclosed was once rich corn land: with systems of irrigation it will no doubt soon become so again, but it will be a sad loss in many ways, and we must hope that unreclaimed oases may remain to show what the Camargue is to-day.

The Crau, east of the Greater Rhône, remains, and no doubt will remain, a stony plain, and the wily Frenchman, who does not like waste, is using it, after due building of tracks, for motor maniacs to break their necks on in speed

[1] There is an excellent article in the "National Geographic Magazine," Vol. xlii, No. 1, on the Camargue, from which the account of the *abrivado* which follows is taken.

and other trials. The sudden change in passing from Crau to Camargue is rather striking.

Folk-customs linger in the Camargue, and such as had begun to languish have been revived by the great Provençal Renaissance. It is a land of *rodeo*, of steer-roping and branding, and the chief figure of the Camargue is the herdsman or "cowboy" mounted on his white horse, the origin of whose breed is unknown. Certain Camargue customs, the Plucking of the Cockade, the Throwing and Branding, and so on, have been already described: but the chief mark of Camargue sport, so unlike our Cup ties, is that nobody is left out; the spectators are very much part of the show, and form, in fact—with the help of a few carts, barrels, and so on—the barrier of the ring. When, therefore, the bull is at a loose end he will sometimes make sport with this living barrier, and then every one must get behind or on top of something with all speed. But even this is nothing to the *abrivado*, where women and innocent children line the narrow street of the Camargue town or village (there are not many) while the trident-bearing horsemen drive in the bulls at top speed. The duty of the women and children—with no doubt a sprinkling of men-folk—is to irritate the driven rushing bulls and make them break line and play up generally.

In the open, the lariat of horsehair is used, the thrower first dismounting. But in cattle-rounding it is hard to say whether it is the man or the horse that does it. To call the horses intelligent would be an insult. They join in the games as well as in the work of the humans; there is a sort of polo called *écharpes*, in which you snatch a scarf from an opponent's arm before he gets yours; and there is also musical chairs or "Sparrow-hawk," where your pony must get to a base at the sound of a bugle. Of course the ponies soon learn the game and play it almost unguided.

The Camargue is not the place for a hot day. It is dusty and drear, and there is no shade. Mistral has chosen the Camargue for the sunstroke which robbed Vincent of his sweetheart. Mireille, hastily attiring herself, and forgetting, alas! her great sun-hat, makes over the stony Crau and crosses the Greater Rhône in Andreloun's boat. Then she passes along the fen-waters of Vaccarès, and having turned it, struggles, already doomed and dying, southward to Saintes-Maries.

On her way she seems to see the city already before her:

it is a mirage, recalling Arles, which our simple Mireille had not, however, visited.

Here is Mistral's story:

She, choked with heat, hath loosed the pin
That binds her bodice; from within
The tender ripple of her breasts
Like some pure streamlet's wavelet-crests
Gleam white—as in the summer's heat
The bell-flowers growing by the sea
Spread their soft petals, snowy, sweet.

But little by little before her eyes the country grew less dreary; little by little, in the distance stirs and shines a great lake; jasmines, purslains, grow about the moistened earth, and make a canopy of soft shade.

Oh! 'twas a view divine!
A glimpse of the Promised Land!
Along the marge, by the white lake-strand
A city, its streets, its rampart-walls,
Roofs, and churches, and mansions fine,
Fountains;—great belfries that tower'd to the sun,
Ships, white-winged yachts, at the quay;
Pennants and burgees afloat at the top of the masts,
On a light breeze flowing free.

But as Mireille starts to run towards the city—

As fast the scene changes; as fast it is gone.
She follows, it moves; seems to call "Follow me!"

* * * * *

And so across the shifting burning sands,
Over the salt-marsh, bright
With thousand-facet light,
Onward and on went she.

And onward ever, through the tall marsh-heath
Thinking of Vincent, tho'
Passing, since long ago,
Along Vaccarês' sea,

Already, joy! she spies the great white church
Rise from the sea afar
Like tall ship on the bar
(Oh! pity! Maries three)

When arrows from the cruel cruel sun
Smite into fire her brow!
She falls, she faints! O Crau,
Thy lily faded see!

* * * * *

Across the Camargue you go to Aigues-Mortes, in the west, and to Saintes-Maries, more directly southward; to Aigues-Mortes by St. Gilles and to Saintes-Maries from Trinquetaille, across the bridge from Arles.

AIGUES-MORTES

Aigues-Mortes seems to me rather wasted because nobody there plays the Wall-game. It seems built simply for the purpose. They do play an odd kind of fives against it, and the little arrow-slits and other unexpectednesses make good winning hazards. They also played football (as distinguished from Rugby), but Lunel, who were to have contested, turned tail and scratched. I shall always have a poor idea of Lunel.

A city built on the model of Damietta, to accustom the crusading hosts to what they were to meet the other side—with its gates opposite each to each, its clear views seen right through two walls to the sparkling salt-hills in the far distance—it is indeed a remarkable place. It has a little canal on the side from which you approach it, and a queer little comic-opera seaport at the end of it.

Its walls are fine, and one can have quite a good morning's tour going round the rampart. The battlements are on one side only. You get let out through a little doorway on a roof and round you have to go till you meet the tricolour on a pole, when you can get down by another little doorway. But oh! the in-between, with a nasty drop on your left hand, and a perpetual itching to stand on that side and look over the roofs of the town, instead of gazing at Constance Tower, and the marshes, and the far-off sea, and the glistening salt-mounds, as any sensible person would. At one corner I saw my companion, busily sketching below over a horrible smell (in summer they must be impossible; fortunately the town is occasionally flooded), and called to him for help: he remained cold and stolid, and worked on. Never did I so much love the tricolour, and as I found a lovely ball on the battlements, from the overnight game, which I presented to the guardian's little girl, my descent was a joy all round. I do not care to be a *philosophe sur les toits*.

Coming in, as evening fell, we saw flocks of sheep, led by their shepherds; and in one flock were two goats who wore a self-conscious and apologetic look. I felt sorry for them.

We were most comfortable at our hotel (St. Louis) and were looked after by Madame, who, though clearly sixteen stone, flitted over the polished floors like an Ariel. She gave us Picpol wine, the better for growing on a saltish soil, where the vine pests do not venture.

SAINTES-MARIES

Avignon is the great mediæval city; Arles and Nîmes are the centres of Roman domination, glorious in ruin, and —so long as we forget how those great ruins were built— splendid, superb; St. Rémy, less impressive (and dare we say therefore less oppressive?), Tarascon and Beaucaire, with a simpler charm, fronting one another across the broad swift Rhône; Les Baux, faery, eerie, fantastic; Maillane, Graveson, humble little dusty villages; but Saintes-Maries is somehow full of a sweet tenderness that not all the boiling-oil loopholes of its great castellated church can belie. Is it *all* due to the magic hand of Mistral? no; he only made what he found there. Somehow the loneliness, the legends, the site, between marsh and sea, of this little town, all church, as you see it across the Camargue, make it something quite of its own. Aigues-Mortes can in some ways reproduce its "feel" and atmosphere, but Aigues-Mortes still seems to throb with the tread of expectant crusaders, and Saintes-Maries, save on their two great festivals, sleeps silent and solemn, on its little Rhône and its long sea-beach.

It was Mistral's greatness to embody all this soft tender mystery into the closing scenes of "Mirèio," and rightly does Mireille herself stand there, in bronze, straining forward, death already upon her, to the Maries' shrine. It is Mistral, too, who has best told the well-worn legend of the Maries and their companions; the evangelistic wanderings and wonder-workings of St. Martha, St. Lazarus, St. Maximin, and the ever-falling tears of the Magdalene at La Sainte-Baume.

Saintes-Maries is dominated in every sense by its great triple church, built in the twelfth century on an earlier one. Its sacred well was no doubt called upon more than once to water the inhabitants, beleaguered by Moors or other swooping pirates. The great yearly gipsy gathering must revive the scenes of long ago, for the gipsies spend the night in the nave. About the church is a space where the Camargue mares are blessed each spring; and there are posts all about of a bull-

ring (not mooring-posts in time of flood, as one writer quaintly conceives !). It is in May, at the gipsy gathering, that the *courses de taureaux*, the *ferrades*, and the *farandoles* are held. Fortunate they who can secure a place for vespers of the 24th, and see a sight unique in Europe.

The sea is not forgotten ; it is visited and blessed ; and rightly, for the people are nearly all fisher-folk.

THE BOHEMIANS

Why the word " Bohemian " has become the synonym for " wild " and " unfettered " would puzzle the future writer of dictionaries, did we not know that somehow the gipsies had become specially associated with Bohemia : of them, and not of the kindly mild-mannered Czechs do we speak when we use the term. So far as I am aware, Bohemia has not recently been their chief centre ; but it may be that the kind reception given to the Jews in Bohemia, at least in Prague, was also given to these wandering people.

It is in Spain that one must look for gipsies in their numbers : and four-fifths of their total number are outside Europe altogether. The Bohemians are said to have arrived in France in 1422, and they came from Bohemia, but had not settled there. One may perhaps connect their trek with the coming fall of Constantinople, or with the actual invasion of India by Tamerlane.

European countries continued to reject them, at least by edict, but somehow they filtered in, and managed to make themselves comfortable in their odd manner, while beyond a bit of horse-coupering and chicken-stealing, it was found that they were not as dark as they were painted. The Bohemian in literature is well enough known. Never perhaps has so delicate a sketch been made as in Cervantes' novel " La Gitanilla." Their customs and traditions have been studied, and are pretty well known. Their education is slight, but at certain things they are peculiarly apt, and these accomplishments they cover by a pretence, at least, and generally more than a pretence, of more gentle and helpful arts. The marvel is that they live at all, working little, in countries where the peasant works himself and his family to the bone.

They are more tenacious of their customs than the Jews themselves. It is said—I know not if truly—that they still

start out in the opposite direction to that which they propose to take : a precaution which must lose its value by repetition. They are born under cover, and that is about all ; they live no more than they need in their caravans, and they die in the open air.

Saintes-Maries is their great assembly place, and there they used (at least) to elect their Queen. They are, of course, well known to Provence from the fantastic villain's part assigned to the red-cloaked " Bohemian " in the Pastorales. Desperate fellows they are, and I am not ashamed of my start of terror when, fresh from the Pastorale, and sitting in the hotel lounge, I saw before me the Bohemian in the flesh ! It was a sergeant of Spahis searching for his captain.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PASSING OF MIREILLE

NOW, of course, after Mistral's great work, one cannot think of Saintes-Maries except with memories of Mireille, whom we have left fainting in the Camargue : and here, in an unworthy rendering, is the story of her passing.

Mireille has reached, fainting from sunstroke, the church of the Maries ; they have carried her to the upper chapel ; her father and mother have found her, and now Vincent, the basket-weaver, her lover, finds her and bursts into despairing agonizing cries.

The canto is so instinct with the breath of Provençal life, with its simplicity, its belief, and its sympathy, that it will be well to give it in full.[1]

THE PASSING OF MIREILLE

In the country where oranges grow, at the time when God's daylight passes away,—when the fishermen, their nets spread out, haul their ships into the shelter of the rocks, and when leaving their branches the girls, each helping the other, lift their full baskets on to head or hip,

From the banks where the Argens winds, from plains, hills, paths, rises up in the distance a long choir of songs: but bleatings of goats, songs of love, airs on the shepherd's pipe, little by little lose themselves in the brown mountains, and come the shadows and a gentle sadness.

Just so faded the words of the Maries as they soared up, faded little by little, from cloud of gold to cloud of gold, like an echo of a song, like a far distant strain of music, passed away with the breeze above the ancient church.

One would have said that Mireille slept, dreamed there on her knees, and that a strange sun-ray crowned her forehead with new beauties.—But over the wastes and the reed-beds her aged parents have so sought her that at length they have found her ; and they stand there, beneath the porch, astounded.

[1] In prose, verse, and outlines (in brackets).

Yet they take of holy water, and sign their forehead with hand bedewed; on the noisy flags her mother and old father enter the church. Scared,—as a bird which suddenly sees the fowlers—"O God!" she cried "Where are you going, father and mother?" and seeing and knowing them, Mireille fell forward. Her mother, her face covered with tears, runs, seizes her in her arms, and cried—

My child, my child! Thy brow how burning!
No, 'tis no dream, my wild brain turning!
My child, that lies here at my feet, it is, it is!
(So speaks she, laughing now, now crying)
Mireille my darling! ('tis her father sighing)
See! now I clasp thy hands! (She naught replying)
The greybeard, choked with grief, warms her cold hands in his.

On the wind's wings the word flies spreading,
The village-folk come softly treading
About the church doors—"Lift her—lift her—there on high!
To the saints' shrine! The sacred relics bringing
Let her pale lips, whence now her soul is winging,
Kiss those most holy arks!"—Their cry comes ringing,
And women gently lift her, answering the cry.

Three altars are, three chapels, builded
One above other, carven, gilded;—
The crypt, where Sarah lies; the church, and altar high;
Built o'er the choir the third, enshrining
In arks of choicest cypress-lining
The Maries' bones—its roof lifts shining
Clear upward to the bright and all-embracing sky.

Once in each hundred years those sealed
Arks to the faithful are revealed;
O happy, happy they, those bones who touch, who see!
Kind winds will waft his boat a-sailing,
His fruit-trees bear their fruit unfailing,
His soul bright clouds of glory trailing
Moves up the path of Faith to greater joys to be.

A fine oak door, richly carved, the gift of the people of Beaucaire, guards this sacred place. But what guards it most of all is not the door which bars the way, not the battlements around it; but the favour which comes upon it from on high!

To the little chapel, up the winding stair, they carried the sick girl. The priest, in white surplice, opens the door. In the dust, like a field of barley weighted with its ears shaken by a sudden wind, all prostrate themselves on the flagstones, crying:

O Saints humane ! O saints of God !
Who erstwhile our sad earth have trod
And know, and feel, and sympathize
With all our human miseries !
O Saints, have pity ! Pitying aid
Your suppliant, this poor dying maid !

The Mother's Vow.

O pity, holy ones ! O bring
My darling safe !—I'll give my ring,
My ring of gold—my jewelled cross :—
O'er moor and fell, o'er marsh and moss,
Thro' towered cities I shall tell
Your mercy shown in miracle.

The Father's Prayer.

O pity, Saints ! There lies my dove,
My treasure dear ; my sweetest love ;
To her, yet innocent, a child,
Give life, give joy and undefiled ;
Mere cumberer of the ground, take me !
Some spot at least will richer be.

(Thus Maître Ramon, in deepest desolation, prays that he may go "to manure the earth," if only his darling child may be saved !

But Mireille lies, voiceless, her eyes closed. They have placed her on the chapel roof, in sight of the sea ; with its waves, never tiring, coming to break upon the long sandy shore :

At last Mireille murmurs—"I feel two breezes, from the land, fresh as the breath of morning ; from the sea, salt and bitter."

The village folk, watching, saw hastening across the wastes a form : it is Vincent !

So soon as his father had told him "My son, the flower of the Lotus Farm is not for your lips !"—he had started at once for Valabrègue to see her once more.)

In the Crau, they had told him she is at Saintes-Maries ! He had devoured the road ; he breaks into the chapel ; breaks into frantic prayer and expostulation ; he is no matricide ; he has committed no sacrilege ; what has he done, to win so cruel a chastisement ? "It was not enough to refuse her ; they have martyred her !"

And he embraced his loved one ; the crowd is all in tears ; their voices mounted from the lower church like the noise of a torrent falling from cataract to cataract . . .

And as in the depths of some valley the noise of water falling in cataract stirs the shepherd yonder on the up-

lands, so from the depth of the church came up the voice of the people, chanting their hymn: all the church quivered, at the sweet hymn of the villagers—

The People's Hymn.

O Saints, that sailed our stormy main
And in our marshlands dwelling
Have set therein your tower'd fane
All other shrines excelling,
O, but for you, when seas dash high,
Who hears the half-drown'd seaman's cry?
Who stills the wild waves' swelling?

O, save for you, what life shall lead
The poor soul blind and ailing
Whom sage nor thyme nor marish-weed
To heal is found availing:
In Death-in-Life she sits and sighs
And moans her sightless miseries:
Restore her, Saints unfailing!

O Ladies, Queens of Paradise,
On our poor fens descending
You speak! and with the wish'd for prize
Our fishers' nets are bending;
O hear the sinner-throng that waits
O our white marsh flowers! at your gates!
O grant us Peace unending.

So prayed the good people of Saintes-Maries; with heart-rending cries. The Saints breathed into the poor sufferer new strength; on her face, now fresher, blossoms a tender happiness; to see once more her Vincent, that is indeed happiness too deep for words.

Mireille to Vincent.

Dearest, whence comest thou? Down there
In our dear farm, rememberest thou
When seated neath the foliage,—how
Thou badest—"Comes there any care
Or sorrow—vexing heart or mind—
O haste thee where the saints do dwell,
The Maries' shrine—all shall be well,
Comfort and heavenly help thou'lt find."

O Vincent! see'st not through my breast
All crystal clear—with comfort fill'd;
Comfort, and help—thy saints so will'd,
All welling over, trebly blest?

My heart is like some fountain clear
Running delight, with joy a-flood;
Happiness, graces, every good—
Angelic choirs I see, I hear!

So ceas'd Mireille: then seem'd to gaze
Far into space, as if to view
Mystical wonders, deep and new,
In the horizon's azure haze.

Then dimly breathes she—"Blessed, blessed they,
The souls now freed from burdens of the flesh.
Sawest thou, Vincent, as they wing'd their way
The light shed from them in a golden mesh?

How trebly sweet a book, could one but write
Their heavenly words—all, all!" and he, oppress'd,
Stifling his sobs "O would to God the sight
Had been mine too, the sight, the Vision blest!

O, I had seized upon their mantles' hem,
O, I had prayed—Ye Queens of Heav'n above,
Our refuge: take my hands—yea, both of them!
Put out my eyes! but give me back my love.

O give me back my little fairy maid!"
—He hushed. She speaks: "They come! They come again!
Robed in white samite, see!"—As thus she said,
Freed from her mother's hold, she points towards the main.

All rose, all seaward looked: "'Tis but the haze,
Only the far white line where sky and sea
Blend into one; none comes." But she, a-gaze,
Cries "Yes! look, look! They come, they come to me!

"Their ship is sail-less—ever as they move
The swell grows calm; the air is clear; the breeze
Brings them so swiftly! Sea birds from above
Circle to greet them o'er the charmèd seas!"

"She is raving"—they say "we see only the setting sun"—But Mireille cries again. "Yes, it is they! and their heaving ship is coming to me! I am not deceived!"

But already her colour changes, like a white marguerite half blown that the sun's rays scorch; Vincent, terror in his soul, kneeling near his beloved, commends her to Our Lady, to the Saints of Paradise.

Candles were lighted; in violet stole comes the Priest with the Angel's bread to refresh her burning lips; then he gives her the last anointing, seven anointings with the Holy Chrism.

All was calm. You could only hear the *Oremus* of the Priest. By the wall, the daylight faded, its golden reflections growing fainter, and the sea broke with a long rustle of its great waves.

Kneeling, her tender lover, with her father and mother, uttered from time to time a dull sob. "Come!" said Mireille again; "the parting is near: now, your hands, for the halo grows on the brow of the Holy Ones.

To meet them the pink flamingoes gather from Rhône's banks—the flowering tamarisks begin to worship—O kind saints! They beckon to me to come with them—for I have nothing to fear—they know the stars! their ship will take us straight to Paradise."

Maître Ramon cries—"Darling! what is it to me to have cleared all that heath—if you leave us? The inspiration which carried me on came all from you! The heat, the smoke, the burning glebes parched me: but at the sight of you, heat and thirst vanished!"

"Dear father, when you see some tiny moth grow a flame in your lamp—it will be me! The saints are standing, on the prow, and wait for me! Yes! Wait but a little moment; I am ill; I come slowly!" Her mother breaks out—"Oh, 'tis overmuch!

You must not, must not die! Stay with me! and then, O my Mireille, when you are better, we shall go to see your aunt Aurane, to take her a basket of pomegranates! From Baux to Maillane is only a little way—a day there, and back again!"

"Only a little way, dear mother: but you must go alone—give me, mother, my white scarf! You see the lovely white scarves on the Maries' shoulders? Snow on the hills, the splendour of the snow, is less dazzling."

The brown basket-weaver cries: "My all, my lovely one! Who opened to me a fair fresh palace of love! your love, a gift doubly blest! You, by whom all the mud in me was cleansed away as a mirror is cleansed—and with no fear of idle tongues.

You, pearl of all Provence! Sun of my young soul! shall it be said that so soon I see you dewed with the icy dews of death? O mighty Saints! shall it be said that you have seen her in her agony, all in vain embracing your sacred threshold?"

Then the young girl slowly answered—"O my poor Vincent! what is it you have before your eyes? Death

—that cheating word—what is it? A mist that parts asunder with the passing bell! A dream whence one awakeneth in the morning!

No! I do not die! With light foot I step even now on the boat! Good-bye, Good-bye! Already we are out at sea! The sea, lovely heaving plain, is the path to Paradise—for the blue of the expanse touches all around even to the bitter waters!

Ah! how the sea cradles us! Among so many stars up there I shall surely find one where two kindred hearts may be free to love! Oh Saints! Is it an organ playing far off?" And the dying girl sighed, and turned her head as if to sleep—

To see her smiling face you would have said she was still speaking. But already the village-folk around her, came one by one, and with a taper passed from hand to hand made each one, towards her, the sign of the Cross.

(Maître Ramon and his wife look on in dazed agony. Vincent breaks out into wild lamentation. "She cannot be dead! Kind people, who have looked on the dead, did they smile so?" But he is answered by tears and sobs. It is like the nine days' moaning of the herd for the dead heifer in the marshes. Vincent cries to the kind village-folk. "Let me be buried with her: tears will not suffice for a mourning such as mine! Let us be beneath the waves; heap up a great cairn of stones above us! and there for ever we shall mingle our kisses!" Wellnigh out of his mind, the basket-maker casts himself on the body of Mireille and clasps to himself the dead! From below the chant ascends—)

O Saints that rule the bitter sea,
  On our poor shores descending
You speak! and with the longed-for prize
  Our fishers' nets are bending!
O hear the sinner-throng that waits—
O our white marsh flowers!—at your gates;
  O grant us Peace unending.

CHAPTER IX

FROM FOS TO MARTIGUES

WE are now to transport the reader to the eastern arm of Provence, across the Crau, the stony Crau, over which some giant Deucalion and Pyrrha once showered many boulders. This dull plain is broken by oases, and each oasis has a farm or two, with scattered cottages. Miramas, near the Étang de Berre, is its chief centre, and a growing one. I met its schoolmaster and had much talk with him on educational matters, though it was clear that his heart was, if not chasing the deer, at least pursuing hares, rabbits, and other wild things. On such subjects, rather out of my own beat, I kept a sympathetic silence, not murmuring even when he told me what happened at the sixteenth rabbit. Berre, further down, is the port of the mere, but the jewel thereof is Martigues, a great centre for artists, where the "tartanes" come clustering in from the sea, and the little fisher-houses creep reluctantly inland along picturesque, untidy, narrow streets.[1]

Provence strictly begins on the east of the mouths of the Rhône, although a great deal of the interest from Provençal literature lies on the west across the great Camargue, and at Saintes-Maries. Immediately on the east of the Rhône comes the great sunny plain called the Crau. Directly east of that comes the great inland lake called the Étang de Berre, which has its outlet through Martigues into the Gulf of Fos.

In order to be quite sure that I miss nothing along the length of this coast, I will begin at the very beginning, and propose to follow my journey through, even at the cost of a certain amount of repetition. First, perhaps, I may say, by way of general introduction, a little to answer the questions of people who want to go to the south of France, as they vaguely call it, and are not quite clear where to go to, or when to start. Perhaps we may say that it is quite safe to start

[1] Mr. Joseph Pennell has done justice to Martigues in "Play in Provence," by J. and E. Pennell.

in November. The great and expensive hotels probably will not open till December, but we have in mind at the moment rather a traveller who would not in any case go to the *hôtels de luxe*. Such travellers should remember that all this coast is a great resort in summer for the French, who love to bask in the sun and to spend as long as possible in the sea as the Italians do on their own Italian Riviera. The result is that there are any amount of hotels from end to end of this coast, which, from November onwards to perhaps May, are only too glad to receive visitors. If one chooses one's hotel with a certain amount of care (for my part I always try to avoid any hotel which contains the word " grand " in its title, but there is a more practical way of selecting by getting hold of a complete list of hotels from the French Touring Club or elsewhere), one can be fairly sure of reasonable prices even in these days, and even upon the Riviera in its more limited sense, that is, from Cannes eastward. There are great advantages in getting to the coast before Christmas if possible: not the least of these is that the trains are much less crowded, though here again we have not so much in mind the regular Riviera visitor as those more adventurous spirits who do not quite know what they are in for, and who therefore are not in so desperate a hurry to get to their journey's end. To these we suggest breaking the journey as much as possible, and sleeping comfortably in their beds on the way. It is by no means too long a journey for the day to travel down by the eight o'clock train from Paris in the morning as far as Avignon, or, by changing there, even a little further. The really inexperienced travellers will perhaps like to be warned not to stay as a rule at the biggest places. They will possibly be better off at Orange than at Avignon, or possibly at Tarascon, rather than Arles.[1] It is easy to visit the great centres while paying the price of the lesser places. Those who drive in their own cars can of course do what they like, but if they too are, like John Gilpin, of frugal mind, they will be wise to do the same thing. In November or December there may possibly be more rain on the southern coast than one cares for, but it clears rapidly, and one cannot guarantee against rain at any time, even in the strict Riviera season of January to April. Those who are going to settle in some of the important centres of the true Riviera must necessarily book their rooms before-

[1] At Tarascon I was comfortable at the " du Louvre " and at Arles at the " Midi."

hand, but they will often be disappointed. Those who begin, as I suggest they should begin, as far west as possible, or those who, having less time, start at Hyères and work east thence, can quite easily, by running out on a train or a tram, make sure of their rooms in the next place, or while west of Cannes they can really be quite safe in dropping in anywhere. If they are going to settle it is not easy to give them advice; no doubt they will go and ask some one who has been there, and will be guided accordingly.

Every one knows what sort of a place is Hyères, and how lovely the flowers are there in the early spring. It is a place where people go again and again; one meets the same faces season after season. The coast east of Hyères, as far as St. Raphael, is the coast of the Maures, with charming bays and beautiful valleys. Then east of that begins the rocky coast with its great cliffs of porphyry, the Esterel, and at Cannes opens the coast which we all know by heart from picture postcards even if we have never been there. Cannes and Menton are, of course, little Londons or greater Brightons. Nice is the great cosmopolitan centre, with a population which is half Italian, and Nice is growing larger and larger every day. My readers will, I hope, be aware that if they want amusement provided they must go somewhere east of Fréjus. Monte Carlo is most worth a visit, even from those who do not want to enter a casino, and at Condamine and Beausoleil one can live fairly cheaply. One may easily tire of the gaiety of the town, and even of its fantastic beauty, but there is always the sea, and there are charming excursions inland. Menton is nearly Italian, and its old town remains to remind us that it is not a mere English settlement after all. It has its regular visitors, but to one who wants to see something of France and the French I should recommend not spending too long in any of the greater centres.

We start, then, our tour of the coast as far west as possible, and there are perfectly charming bits of coast all along from the Gulf of Fos to Cannes itself. Fos itself is quite a fascinating little old-world town. In order to get there you must change at Miramas, a most unprepossessing little place, and one in which I suppose nobody stays unless they want to go on to somewhere else.

In fact, take it all in all, Miramas town, with its wooden shanties for the railway men, its mud roads, and its generally forsaken appearance, is as dingy a spot as one desires to find

in a long day's march. The only bright touch I remember is the somewhat garish salmon-pink colour of the stockings of our hostess's daughter.

The next station eastward from Miramas is St. Chamas, near which is the great Flavian bridge, but there is also a little line running south along the inland lake, through Istres to Fos, and further. Istres is an old colony of Marseille. It has canals and owes to this irrigation its farms and gardens. It is almost on the Lake of Berre, but it has a further lake to the north, and again another to the south of it. One arrives at Fos by driving from the station, for it has the peculiarity of the French Southern Railways, and others, of having its station some little way from the town.

Fos-sur-Mer is so called from the canal or fosse cut by the great (and, in Provence, quite inevitable) Caius Marius, to take his ships from near Arles, a great port in those days, to the sea without running aground in the sand-shoals of the Rhône's delta.[1] The Roman settlement was gradually submerged, and the village went up to the safer top of the hill, where are still the ramparts and the Romanesque church. The sea now behaves itself better, and the village has crept again seawards. There are the customary salt-works. Roman relics can actually be seen in calm seas, bits of columns and great stones, and baths cut in the living rock.

Fos has a long beach, well sheltered, and near by is the lagoon de l'Estomac, well called (though the word really means the mouth, not the receptacle of what passes through the mouth) since good fish are to be angled for in its waters. You can wander far westward towards St. Louis ; eastward is Port-de-Bouc, and farther on, Martigues. Near the railway station, which is not particularly near to Fos, is the remains (at least so it appears) of a lost city, of which we learn from geography ; and there are little culvert arches which supported a raised causeway. Fos is a place to visit, to roam in and around.

Fos played its part in the wars of Hannibal. Scipio disembarked there, in pursuit of the rapid Punic army, now on the Rhône. From Fos to Tarascon there was only the route between the lakes and marshes, through Istres, Mouries, Maillane. Scipio moved slowly. Hanno crossed the Rhône at Villeneuve-lès-Avignon, and came down the left bank to scare away the natives who were disputing Hannibal's passage.

[1] The line of this Canal is discussed below.

He was successful, and Hannibal crossed safely to Tarascon. Scipio's advance cavalry met Hannibal's Africans probably between Tarascon and Maillane; the survivors returned to Fos to report; Scipio moved leisurely, allowed Hannibal to cross the Durance (in flood), and so lost him completely. Scipio should have hurried (as Marius did later) to hold St. Rémy and watch both Rhône and Durance.

Later, Fos was Marius' base too; but Marius was not so tied to his base as Scipio had been.

The invaders came, as Hannibal had come, northward of the lagoons, working east, and crossing the Rhône at Tarascon.[1]

The old town stands on its rock, climbing gradually up to the castle which crowns the height, and looks over on to the lake, turning its back upon the sea. On the very top, in the cemetery, there is a fine Roman oven, for Marius, when building his great dykes here, was evidently not forgetful of the needs of his soldiers and sailors. Many of the foundations of the castle are obviously very ancient, but a great part of it is built straight on to the solid rock, and charming and beautiful views can be had of it from either side. Down on the coast is a fine stretch of sand which runs for many kilometres both east and west—a great bathing-place of the French families. I looked in vain for anything that would reveal the entry of Marius' great canal, but there is nothing, not even a depression in the long plains that one sees from the castle heights. On the coast I picked up an old amphora, or at any rate a bit of one, encrusted over with shells, and evidently having spent a very long time indeed in the sea. In a garden not far off I saw a fine collection of these old relics, and no doubt there are plenty to be found where the mouth of the canal once ran. It has a strange thirteenth-century little church, and from the

[1] In the above I follow a clear account given by Sir T. A. Cook, in "Old Provence," Vol. I, chap. 2. But I do not feel at all sure he is right in identifying the course of the Fossa Mariana with that of the Duransole, from Chateau Renard towards Laurade. His idea is that the lagoons, helped by flooding, took shallow boats from Fos to St. Gabriel (Ernaginum) and that from St. Gabriel to the Durance (not Rhône) they travelled by Marius' canal. But Fos certainly means "Fossæ" or "fossa," and I cannot see how Fos could have been a practicable seaport, either to Scipio or Marius, without some canalization. Plutarch's words suggest that the canal ran through to the sea. The Romans would no doubt use the lagoons (now for the most part drained) as de Lesseps used the lakes on the Suez Canal.

castle hill there are most glorious views over the great plain of Crau towards the great Lake of Berre, eastward to Port St. Louis, and westward to Port-de-Bouc. There is altogether something very charming and quaint in the way in which the little town deliberately turns its back upon the sea, which reminds me of a strange old lady I met in the train going to Monte Carlo. She was sitting on the side by the sea, and I was in the inland corner. When the seat opposite me became vacant, the strange old creature, who had been muttering to herself in odd ways during the journey, and who was surrounded with an abundance of little parcels and a bird cage, all very much in keeping, suddenly rushed across the railway carriage, planted herself and her belongings in the seat opposite me, and exclaimed in a vindictive way, " Je n'aime pas la mer."

Every one will know that the sea at Monte Carlo is supposed to be more blue and more beautiful than anywhere else along the southern coast. Fos seems to be echoing the old lady's words. It turns as it were disdainfully from the sea to gaze on its beloved Crau, and its inland lakes. To the encouragement of those who fear lest in going to these little quiet places they might often return hungry, I may say that I went into a restaurant in this sleepy little town rather wondering whether anything, except perhaps an omelette, was likely to be produced. The proprietor seemed a little astonished at our calling for lunch, and requested ten minutes to think over it. Never was ten minutes' thinking put to a better purpose; it resulted in an entirely magnificent meal. There was a lobster paté of peculiar excellence, and that was only one of a series of dishes, for it seemed a meal that would never end. With some of the delicious white wine of Cassis to help it down, it cost us half a crown apiece. The fact is that one can always count upon the little places. I remember even during the Great War going down then to a tiny little inn—if indeed it deserved the name of inn—on the Italian Riviera. One used to go and ask for a meal. The signora would come and make ample conversation, all of which seemed to be rather off the point. A few olives and a little bit of sausage would be thrown before us just to quell our first ravenings. Still the signora would talk of the war, the weather, Italian politics, and almost anything. Then she would dive away and produce an omelette, also with much conversation. It was clear that the omelette was meant to keep us quiet for the time being. It

was just thrown to the wolves. But suddenly the signora would break off her war talk, or her politics, and clap her hands and look towards the sea. That meant that the boat that had been hastily sent out into the little bay upon our arrival was coming back, and had made a catch. Then, while chickens could hardly be had for love or money, and goats were at a premium, we would finish an excellent lunch on the most delicious fish, cooked to perfection.

Fos treated us even better; and I may say that though there is not much to do there after one has exhausted its quaintness and its antiquities, and has hunted for the opening of the canals, and picked up amphoræ on the beach, and so on, yet I left Fos with great regret. But our aim was Martigues, a charming and really picturesque little fishing town that lies on the inner end of the opening between the Lake of Berre and the Gulf of Fos. Martigues is the very home of Bouillabaisse, the dish for which one has to acquire a liking. It is, as all are aware, cooked of various fish with a kind of overflowing or sauce of some yellow substance that may be turmeric. The fish tastes, although it is perfectly fresh, as if it were slightly ancient, and the gravy in which the fish is cooked is served up with rounds of bread.[1]

Martigues did not disappoint us; it is utterly charming. It was interesting to study the walls of the houses at the best viewpoints, one of which is really just like a little patch of Venice, and see the dabs of oil-paint that almost cover great patches of the walls. As every one knows, numerous painters have worked there, and will no doubt go on working there as long as some of the old houses and the charming tartanes exist. These tartanes are used for fishing in the open; smaller boats are used for the lesser fishing in the lake. It was a great sorrow to find that the tartane disappeared as one went east. A great deal is being done in these days by motor boats, and even at Martigues itself there are plenty of them. The tartane is really a Genoese rig, and I can't help suspecting that there is

[1] Here is a description by Paul Arène: "The Bouillabaisse arrived, steaming, served in one of these enormous shells which the fishermen of Latin seas use by way of dish. A saffron steam filled the room, leaving to the imagination rather than revealing to the sight the white pieces of lobsters and the browner bits of 'scorpion-fish' on the slices of spongy bread all soaked in golden gravy. Before each guest was placed a primitive plate of cork-oak bark, in the fashion of Provençal fishermen; an excellent system; in case of shipwreck every one could float off on his plate."—Le Canot des Six Capitaines, ch. iii.

MARTIGUES

some Genoese element in Martigues, as I certainly heard a number of scraps of Italian in ordinary conversation. One well-known painter lived and worked and died at Martigues. He was Ziem ; and in the museum at the Hôtel de ville there are several of his paintings which were evidently in the style of Claude and Turner, and some of which are certainly very fine work. But one did not want to go indoors to see pictures at Martigues ; it is a perfect study in brown, or rather in browns. There are the upturned boats, the hanging nets, the low sheds, the fishermen's yard. In one shed I saw in the darkening light of evening a brown-haired girl mending brown nets against a background that was all of brown. Dante, who understood the joy of soft brown colours, would have loved Martigues.

The Lake of Berre is salt ; it is bordered with hills, which have a few dwarf shrubs and small olives. The shore of the lake has a border of salt works. It lies entirely free from all storms, and would make a fine refuge for a big fleet. At present it can only be reached by ships requiring little water. The deepening of the canal would be necessary before larger ships could come in. In point of fact, there is no real need in this part of France for any large port : with Toulon and Marseilles so close, there is plenty of room for shipping.

Those who want to learn more of Martigues can read the charming book of Joseph Pennell called " Play in Provence." He describes, amusingly, how he thought to have discovered this little place, but learned afterwards it was a well-known centre of French artists. As you look over the canal you see the old buildings reflected in the water, and boats, which you imagine to be gondolas, are floating to and fro. There are, at any rate, fishing boats in plenty, and they, in the south of France, are always picturesque.

Port-de-Bouc is rather a dull little place, but it is there where the modern Rhône canal really flows out. There are a few tartanes there, a few small steamers, a huge bridge across the Caronte lake, some shipbuilding yards, and a few factories. One looked towards lighthouses, and the outer entrance which led straight to the open sea.

Somehow we lost the ordinary omnibus, which takes one to the railway station, on our departure from Martigues, but a small urchin, being bribed with a penny, produced a motor in a very brief space of time, in which we drove, though really having ample time, at breakneck pace along the inland

lake to the station. There was every possibility of catastrophe at any moment, but nothing happened until we reached a long line of wood carts on their wrong side at a sharp turn on the road up to the station, with a heavy stone wall on our right hand. There was much shouting, a good deal of running about: we did not slacken pace: there was a violent bang, but we came through just the same, and, needless to say, had any amount of time to cool our heels at the station.

CHAPTER X

MARTIGUES TO FRÉJUS

FROM Martigues we worked the coast to Marseille, and very fascinating it is. One runs for a time along the sea, occasionally dodging away, and every now and then running over a viaduct or through a tunnel. There are charming little combes from time to time. Sausset-les Pins is a little tiny fishing harbour with lovely pines clustering all round, in just as charming a position as any little place could well be. It is clearly a great resort of the people of Marseille in the summer; no doubt there would be little enough to do in winter time, or even in the spring, but for a few days' rest cure it looks to me an ideal little place. Not far off are some of the calanques or fiords, which one finds all along this coast. Farther on one comes to another tiny place nestling amid its shelter of pines—Cari-de-Rouet. There are other little hamlets as well along the coast till one gets to L'Estaque. It is here where the Arles railway line joins the little coast line, passing through an immense tunnel. Then there is also the enormous canal tunnel which meets the coast a little west of this railway tunnel—a canal of twenty-two metres wide, and nearly fifteen metres in total height. The interest of this canal and its tunnel right through L'Estaque is that Marseille evidently has no intention of allowing its neighbours to outstrip it. If big ships are to find their way into the Lake of Berre, Marseille is determined that the Lake of Berre, and all that belong to it, shall first become a sort of dependant of herself. Hence this gigantic work of the tunnel which brings everything from the Lake of Berre into the great southern seaport. As for the place L'Estaque itself, it is an industrial quarter, but that will not spoil it as a bathing place in summer, and quite a pleasant, sheltered spot in winter. The view along the whole of this bay looking over towards Marseille is completely charming. One sees Marseille itself and La Joliette, and then, far away to the south, the line of islands almost to the Isle of Riou. There are charming walks and rambles inland on the peninsula of

L'Estaque, just as there is also a fine bit of climbing to be done on the Massif of Marseilleveyre, south of Marseille, where a dazzling group of rocks and a waterless fall of grottos opens here and there ; a delightful centre for either picnics or for serious climbing.

MARSEILLE

Every one who visits the Riviera must go to Marseille, but it has not, of course, the charm of an ancient place, ancient though it be. There are very few remains of the old colony of the Phœnicians. Its famous history is well known, and its story goes back to the very earliest of ages, for it was none other than the Phœnicians who must first have built their trading centres and their little chapels upon its site. The story of the arrival of the Greeks is one of the pretty legends of Provence. We are told how the chief, Protis, arrived on the coast, and how he was desirous of showing that he had not come in any ill-will. He left, therefore, for Arles, bearing presents, and arrived just at the time when the king of one of the three tribes of this part was holding a great meeting of all the neighbouring princes and warriors that his daughter Gyptis might choose among them a husband. The young, and no doubt handsome, Greek was called in to share the banquet, and he made a strong contrast to the wilder manners of the tribesmen. Little wonder that at the end of the festival it was to him that Gyptis handed the cup that marked him as her future husband. Unfortunately, his success brought down upon him a certain amount of jealousy from the disappointed suitors, and he was obliged to defend himself and his bride at Marseille beneath some primitive form of fortification.

Marseille became great when the inhabitants of its old mother city were driven out by the Persians. They joined the daughter colony, and from that time Marseille became great. She was, as we know, a great rival to the mighty Carthage, and Marseille and Rome were side by side in the great struggle in which Rome at length was victorious.

It was from Marseille that the celebrated sailors, Pytheas and Euthymenes, sailed forth to find the unknown lands that were on the other side of the colony of Hercules. The one went along the coast of Spain and then turned north, reaching, it is thought, even to Iceland ; the other going south, brought back a yellow dust from what is now known as the Gold Coast.[1]

[1] Their further story is given later.

We need not pursue the later history of Marseille. She was queen of the western Mediterranean as Venice of the eastern, but we do not find any longer in Marseille many relics of those ancient days. A few statues and other remains alone tell of her former greatness. For those who like a busy modern seaport, there is plenty to see. Of its antiquities the most interesting perhaps is the ancient church of St. Victor, the remains of an ancient abbey that was founded in 410. It is an old fortified church with towers like that of some strong castle. Its old crypt, which goes back to the earliest times, works its way into little chapels cut into the rock, and once had many Christian tombs.

Every one at Marseille will ask for Bouillabaisse, a kind of fish soup, but not every one will like it. Every one will walk along the Cannebière and see the old port, whose entrance at least is still something like it was in the days of Protis. There are of course many modern buildings worth seeing—a Triumphal Arch—a great aqueduct coming from Roquefavour, which gives to Marseille abundance of health-giving water.

The famous song called the "Marseillaise" was written, of course, by Rouget de Lisle, and gained its name because it was sung by a party of Marseille soldiers at the attack upon the Tuileries.

For those whose time in Marseille is short, it may be well to give a little itinerary which naturally suggests itself, and which will be found a little more fully described in Hare's book.

Starting from the Bourse or Cannebière, one may take a car for Longchamp. Going through the famous Allée of Meilhan, one sees in the Cours Belsunce a statue of the great bishop who worked so nobly in the great plague of 1721. One may pursue the Boulevard de Longchamp to the Palais des Arts where there is a great rush of the water of the Durance over artificial rocks which people compare to the Fountain of Trevi. The Musée des Beaux Arts has some very fine pictures; perhaps it is one of the best collections in Provence. In one wing is the collection of Natural History, and there is a magnificent view from the arcades of the palace. There is a garden behind through which one may pass to the zoological gardens. Next one would go naturally to La Joliette, where one sees the modern cathedral built in the style of an Eastern mosque. The old town is extremely interesting, but the guide-books rightly warn travellers not, as a rule, to enter there alone, and in any case

not to enter thoughtlessly certain of its streets. One's next visit would be to the old church of St. Victor, with its extremely ancient crypt, and few people perhaps would visit Marseille without going up to the modern church of Notre Dame de la Garde, a journey which is worth more for the sake of the views than for the church itself. Then one should find time somehow for the splendid Promenade de la Corniche, and possibly one would be able to work in a visit to the Château d'If, where, of course, our thoughts will chiefly be with the hero of the greatest of all objective romances, the *Count of Monte Cristo*.

PROVENÇAL SAILORS [1]

Every one knows that Provence has sent forth a splendid band of intrepid mariners. From Euthymenes and Pytheas to d'Entrecasteaux there has been an unbroken series ; and it has not ceased with d'Entrecasteaux.

Euthymenes early in the fourth century before Christ sailed boldly into the South Atlantic, emulating the voyage of Hanno of Carthage. He coasted along Western Africa, and though he made many mistakes, and was at one time thought to be a mere " leg-puller " of the de Rougemont sort, it is remarkable how much useful and accurate information, for so early a date, he brought home.

Pytheas made for the North Sea, and those of us who frequently cross the Channel will admire his hardihood. He was perhaps more of the scholar and scientist than Euthymenes ; at any rate he got a " better press," and his doings and discoveries are much better reported in the Greek historians and geographers, though Strabo shows a marked professional jealousy.

Modern science has made good Pytheas' reputation. He owes some of his rehabilitation to another great explorer, Bougainville ; and even the jaundiced Strabo admires his work in mathematics and astronomy.

Marseille did well to send forth these two daring forerunners of Columbus, the one of whom found his way along the coast of Biscay, and made quite a long stay in Britain. He was the first to discover that it was a more or less triangular island. He found the Elbe estuary, and what he called Thule, Iceland or part of Norway. But Thule was not, to him, " ultima,"

[1] A full and interesting account in Barre's " Voyageurs Provençaux," from which I take the story of Le Blanc.

the last. He went up farther north, not touching, it seems, the Arctic ice, but shivering (lover of Provençal sunshine as he was) in the Arctic fogs and sea-frets.

But one of the most interesting of Provençal explorers and travellers is Vincent Le Blanc. He is a sort of earlier Tartarin; at least his stories lost nothing in the telling, and his southern spirit made more terrible and more exciting the really exciting experiences which his adventures brought him. Fortunately he held to the motto "When found"—often, indeed, when not found, except in the limbo of his inner consciousness—"make a note of." He therefore has left behind a fine budget of travel notes, so lurid here and there with the glow of imagined adventure that the friend who had urged him to put his notes together was afraid to publish them.

He was indeed a John de Maundeville, a de Rougemont, and a Jules Verne in one; but he was none the less a keen and penetrating observer, and there is much gold among his romantic dross, which glisters also like gold.

His father, a shipowner, having dissuaded the boy from the sea, what more natural than that the boy should run off to sea, throwing himself, as he quaintly puts it, "neck and crop" into this wandering life. About 1556 he began the wandering, running off to Le Ciotat, where he was captured just as he was signing on as *mousse* or ship's boy. But while he could not overcome the obduracy of his father, who knew, good man, what a life they led who worked his and other owners' ships, his tears overcame his mother's tender anxieties, and at twelve years or so behold him in full sail for Alexandria. The voyage was prosperous; on the return they halted at Candia (this all reads like a bit of the Odyssey) and the sailors rapidly ran through their ample profits. When they came to themselves, they realized it might be awkward to appear before their owners empty, so they opened the seacocks, but so clumsily that nearly all met a just retribution in the deep. Our ship's boy becomes house-boy to the French Consul, but after eight months' durance makes a vow to visit the Holy Land, and incontinently sets forth, with William of Cassis to bear him company. They meet with plenty of compatriots from the South. One of them, who must have had something of the nature of the Pope's mule, had become dervish to avenge himself on some unrighteous judge. He bided his time long, but alas! was discovered. With a more fortunate "renegade" from his own Marseille, our adventurous youth makes for Mecca, and

the three (for William of Cassis would not be left out) penetrated into the sacred city, of whose most secret ceremonies Le Blanc gives us a graphic and precise account. But apart from these dangerous discoveries, he was delighted with the sight of a real live unicorn, which foolish rationalizing naturalists reduce to a mere oryx. So to Aden, and, being tempest-driven, to Ormuz, what more natural than to go on to Persia? He looked in at Baghdad and Samarcand and saw the bricks of ancient Babylon. He tells us intimate things of the Sultan, and found, of course, a compatriot—this time a country-woman—who had gone to those far parts to assist her husband in money-making. Obviously one so enamoured of travel as Le Blanc would not turn west while India yet lay behind him. He is at home with the ceremonies of Brahminism as he was with those of Mecca. Keeping chiefly on Portuguese territory, he got to Java, and even to Indo-China. He liked Siam, and seems to have heard his oddest bits of information there, which he gives us liberally —stories of hermaphrodites, Amazons and curious monsters. He returns; passes rapidly by Madagascar, but none the less keeps his diary well filled. We find him in the realm of Prester John (in Abyssinia); he is present at the coronation of the Negus; he finds a prince transmogrified into a monkey. Falling into bad hands in Malta, he is spoiled of his riches. He returns, clad in Greek dress, to find that his funeral was celebrated six months back. A short rest, and off again; wrecked near Gibraltar, captive in Morocco, and condemned to lose his head—a judgment commuted for a daily bastinado, till some Portuguese merchant saved him. He must have repented of the unkind things he had said of the Portuguese ships in which he travelled. In 1582 he returns to Marseille, to settle down. Poor Le Blanc! He began badly by marrying a "terrible" wife—"one of the most terrible women in the world," he says, and he knew. So terrible was she that he hastily arranged to go to Portugal to buy pearls; unfortunately he tried to run away with a nun, and got into the hands of the Inquisition. But a bright idea occurs: he will go and ask absolution at Rome! So much longer respite from the "terrible" Madame Le Blanc, the only terror, save the fleas on the Portuguese ships, which seems to have daunted our adventurer. He found Italy pleasing, and stayed there long after completing his religious business: in fact he turned jeweller, trafficker in precious stones, which (mercifully) required long travels in West Africa. His last voyage was to Brazil; in

Mexico he meets violent earthquakes and hurricanes, which (in view of worse at home) he no doubt met with a frolic welcome. He faced Marseille again in 1606 and died at the age of eighty-seven.

It would be interesting to give some account in Le Blanc's own words of his extraordinary and almost unending travels. An English translation of these appeared under the title "The World Surveyed," and was published in 1660, and from this I take the following description, which appears a very excellent one, of a storm:

"As we were sailing towards Guardefu, the weather grew very cloudy, and we perceived far enough from us a thing like a thick black smoak dropped in the sea; one of our company—a Grecian—drew his sword, and having said a prayer or two, and made the sign of the cross, left not off hacking and hitting upon the hatches until he had cut out three or four pieces, which action set the company a laughing, yet we perceived it to dissipate and remove that smoak from the ship; the horrible thunder and lightning which presently followed strook us all with terror; for my part I prayed heartily, and the tempest was so hugely increased that nothing but lamentations and groans were heard among us, bidding adieu to this world; some were maimed, for this monster, whirling smoak, run in the shape of a baloon from rope to rope, and up the masts of the ship, exceeding swiftly, surrounded with a sparkling fire making the most hideous noise that astonished us all, and tore and mangled the sails into a thousand pieces; some Indian gentlemen defended themselves from this terrible spirit with their scimetars, running up and down; many were killed and hurt, some hid themselves under hatches, others like madmen threw themselves into the water, our poor Christian received a great blow upon his head, and upon his knees read St. John's Gospel, whereupon immediately the spirit vanished, having haunted us an hour and a half; we were all ready to yield up the ghost, my companion was so bruised that he wore his arm in a scarf for two months after; we all testified our astonishment by our silence, gazing upon one another, struck with amazement to see so many dead corpses lying on all sides of us. At length by God's permission we landed, for which mercy we yielded our humble thanks, but we could not find again that man that had maintained that there was neither God nor Devil."

Here is an incident which shows the smartness of a Provençal sailor:

"Being thus driven ashore against the Mount of Gibraltar, as we endeavoured with strength to shove her off, the vessel over-turned and the masts and sails lay in the water, which much amazed us, but by happy fortune a pilot of Marseille being aboard with us for his private affairs, seeing our danger and that every one was fled to the other side of the deck, fell to work and with an axe, opening the side of the ship, let in the water so as the weight set her upright, and by God's grace we escaped this imminent danger, being driven by a gentle gale to a point where we cast anchor."

It seems a desperate remedy.

While the Provençal navigator will navigate against the world, the fishermen in their tartanes, equally adept, use their own simple observations and "smell their way" about their well-known coasts. Joseph Conrad's tale, "The Rover," gives an excellent picture of a tartane at sea.

One of these tartane captains, says Jean Aicard in "L'Illustre Maurin," having to make a wider voyage than usual, was given a chart, and duly instructed in taking his bearings. After one of his noon observations he yelled in horror to his helmsman, "Luff! Luff! and look sharp! we're nearly off the chart!"

CASSIS AND BEYOND

It is from Cassis that the hero of Mistral's great epic, Calendau, comes; and while Les Baux and the mountains form the scene of many of his exploits, it is to Cassis that he leads his hard-won bride Esterelle, the Princess of Baux, and last of her lordly line. Let those who wish to learn what Cassis was like in its earlier days read the latter part of Canto III.

"Cassis is poor; its soil that lies too hilly for the plough is cultivated but in patches; no flocks; no corn; little wine—but that so famous that Marseille makes of it a present to great kings—and yet 'Who has not seen Cassis has seen nothing!'"

Mistral's hero tells stories of the fishing; of the great tunny catch whereby he became rich and great in his native village; of the tragedy of Port-Miou, the "calanque" near by; how a Genoese tartane in a sudden storm made for the tiny entrance; the captain's son seizes the helm; steers through the seething race; the tartane swerves: "Traitor!" cries the captain, and fells his son with a blow! At that moment the ship slides safely past the reef and rides easily in the calm of the little harbour. The heartbroken father drives the yet dripping axe into his own forehead.

He who would know Provence, must carry his "Mirèio," "Nerto," and "Calendau" along with his "Guide Bleu."

Cassis, the harbour mentioned in the Itinerary of Antonine, is of course a long way from the station, and if one descends in the dark, one cannot resist an uncomfortable feeling that one is rushing headlong down into the sea. It is a pleasing little port, only rather spoiled at present by the constant loading of little ships with cement. In summer this must make the little town intolerable, but for winter and spring it is a picturesque little place, and the noise of the loading does

not disturb one's night's rest as it is all done by daylight. The little place stands on its own little bay, very prettily grouped about it. It has some old doors, especially in the street called the Rue d'Arêne, the reason for which name I could not ascertain. It suggests a possibility of a small arena in Roman times, and there are in this street some very ancient arched doorways which might almost go back to Roman times. The eastern side of the bay is crowned with a magnificent crag, and a castle on the top which is gradually, along with its cliff, shelving to the sea. Part of the castle is in private grounds, but one can scramble up a little path and into the remaining portion if one cares to do so. There are delightful walks about, whether to the cape in the direction of La Ciotat, or going west, to some of the calanques, the first of which is rather spoiled by quarries. The next—Port-Pin—is a perfectly charming little fiord, joining, as it does, the third of the group—that of En Vau—the third being the most beautiful of the three. It is not so very easy to find one's way to Port-Pin, but one must cross the head of Port-Miou, follow up the path on the hill-side, and then down from the top till you come to two wells ; the first is open and the second one has been filled up. At that point you go left, that is, towards the sea. The third calanque has rocks almost like those one finds in the Dolomites, and it is worth while remembering when you are at Port-Pin that you are practically upon the third of the series, though one cannot see it. There are other calanques further west which can perhaps best be reached by sea, or from Marseille by tram. Such is the calanque of Sormiou, where will be found a few fishermen's huts and so on. All the cliffs to the west of Cassis give one charming views, though they are themselves rather spoiled by the quarries. One sees there almost every kind of fishing going on ; I did not see any of the great tunny fishing, which is evidently not practised in the way in which Mistral describes it. They use now the line in the open sea. But there is an interesting kind of fishing which one can see off the rocks round about Cassis and elsewhere, with a trident. At first I believed that this was for a tunny, but I was wrong. It is for the fish they call the loup or wolf—a white fish, or at any rate, a silvery fish, which could easily be seen just underneath the shelter of the rocks. One needs a clear and steady head, and one must be comfortably fixed upon one's rock or else one is certain to join the sea-wolf in the depths below. But it is delightful to

watch the expert fishermen, motionless for a time, and then suddenly springing into action. It is only fair to say that I saw no sea-wolves actually speared, but it is quite certain that it can be done.

To the east of the little pier at Cassis there is a public garden, but it has rather a melancholy appearance, and reminded me very much of the park described by Stephen Graham in one of the summer resorts of the Crimea. He came across a desolate spot with a few shrubs and barbed wire all about it save in one place where was the entrance. At the entrance was a large board which read as follows: "In the name of the Prophet Elijah,—Park." But one does not need public gardens at Cassis. There are the hillsides covered with their tufts of rosemary and lavender, on which are hung, in great white patches, the washing of the little town. It would not be fair to speak of Cassis without saying something of its very celebrated white wine. Untravelled English people have in their heads a certain number of names of wines, chiefly those of Burgundy and Bordeaux, which are most exported to our own country. They should always ask in the first instance for the wine of the country. If there is not a wine of the particular place where they stay, there will constantly be some celebrated but little known vineyard but a few miles off. At Vence, for instance, one can find a peculiarly delightful vintage of St. Jeannet. The best wine of Cassis is the white. There are also good wines of the district—Picardien, which is white—Château Jenet, which is a grenache, both coming from further north, but to be had probably along the coast. It is safe perhaps to say when you get into France, avoid the well-known names unless you are going to buy the best.

I found Cassis, in fact, a place to sleep in; a place to spend the morning getting up an appetite for lunch, which was quite easy and worth the trouble. To recover from lunch, as Frenchmen understand it, is a little harder, but then one must get up an appetite for dinner. If one is travelling in the winter, one has indeed a certain number of *mauvais quarts d'heure* to fill up, but one can generally pass away the time reading or writing, unless you happen to have a stove which behaves itself so badly as the stove at Cassis. (It is, however, in process of reparation.) It was with sorrow that I left Cassis and went on my eastern route again.

From Aubagne, north of Cassis, one can reach La Sainte-Baume, the grotto where the Magdalene is said to have wept

out her sins ; a famous place of pilgrimage, where popes and kings and poets came to pray. The revival of the grotto, neglected since the Revolution, is one of the earlier signs of Provençal reawakening. Flower-seekers will find a great number of varieties in the forest. It is altogether an entrancing and romantic spot.

The station of La Ciotat is a long way from the city. It is the old port of Citarista—a musical sounding name, but the chief music that one hears there now is perhaps the hammering of the rivets in the great shipyards. La Ciotat is a capital centre for excursions. It has its calanque—that of Figuerolles, and a fine group of hills—of Soubeyran. In all these hill excursions will be found the paths carefully marked, either by the inhabitants of the nearest town, or by the French Touring Club.

The next place that one may stay at is Les Lèques. This is one of the little French bathing places. It is quite worth staying at in winter, as it is nicely sheltered by a group of hills. This western bit of the coast, I believe, is really very little known at present, and deserves a great deal more attention from those who do not mind being quiet. Les Lèques is gradually winning its way as a winter resort as well as a bathing place. It is from Les Lèques that one finds one's way to the remains, such as they are, of the old port Tauroentum. There are only tiny scraps now to be found ; a good deal of the excavations have been deserted and the sand is sweeping into them. Various things discovered here are worth seeing, and they are to be found at St. Cyr, just a little west.

In the well-known Battle of Tauroentum the Roman fleet was waiting in the harbour in order to go and block the port of Marseille as soon as Cæsar's land operations had got to a favourable stage for the final attack. The Marseille fleet therefore thought best to take the initiative and try to crush the Romans before they could carry out their designs. They covered themselves with glory in spite of their failure, and the " Day of Tauroentum " is a famous one in the history of the little city now vanished. We are told that a ship of Marseille drew alongside a Roman ship which was so hard pressed that it was obliged to take refuge in flight. The Marseille captain was so determined to hold his captive—he already counted the Roman ship secure—that he threw grappling-irons to prevent its escape. But this failed and the Roman ship was gradually

drawing away from her almost triumphant enemy. One of the crew threw himself forward as she passed and grasped the stern to keep the ships close together. The Romans rushing up, cut off his hand with a blow of an axe, but he seized it with the left hand which met a like fate. It is said that he then even gripped the rim of the ship with his teeth, and in any case contrived to delay it so long that the crew of his own vessel were able to get aboard the Roman ship and capture it.

We follow next to the fine bay of Bandol, charmingly placed and well protected. It is at Bandol that one really feels one is in the Riviera itself, as one generally understands it. There you first meet the flowers, the jonquils growing in the open, the violets beneath their shelter. But it is especially celebrated for the immortelles, which are used so largely in France for funeral wreaths. But better than Bandol is the quite charming little town of Sanary, which shares the station with Ollioules, which is more inland. Ollioules itself is a charming little old-world town with beautiful views through its narrow streets up to the great castle that remains on the top of its hill. It is a centre of flowers, and it is well worth visiting Ollioules to see its famous gorges, which are quite within easy reach. They are rather of the type of Cheddar in our own country. If one goes through the gorges one may turn across a bridge to the right, and make up to the strange little village of Evenos, entirely dominated, as so many of these hill villages are, by its old castle that dates from the twelfth century. It is built on the solid rock, and its outer walls are flush with the rock. There are narrow little streets and buried alleyways that group themselves below. One has glorious views from the top, and as you look up towards it as you approach, it looks like a miniature edition of Les Baux with its ruined houses about the desolate rock. Every French village has its little War memorial. At Evenos they have their little plaque to their one soldier, " Mort pour La Patrie." But we must return to Sanary, where one can find little enough to do, but which, in the sunlight and with the sea, and with the perpetual fishing operations going on in its little bay, is just the place for a real rest cure. In the winter half the inhabitants seem to be taking this cure, and I presume the remainder will join up in the summer time. There is no casino in which you can bet and waste money, but those who cannot keep free from speculation of some sort can always bet upon the contents of the seine nets, and they can be pretty sure

that there will be not more than a few extremely small fishes, a poor reward for the immense labour of setting and laying the net.

From Sanary one can make one's way, with the help, if one wishes, of the tram, to Six-Fours. This is an old Greek settlement, and means the " six forts " or outposts. The village is no more ; the houses are in ruins. I thought at first that it had no inhabitants at all, save the troops in the fort, but I saw a child and a dog outside what was once a house, just as I was coming away. I do not know the history of the deserting of this village, but I am inclined to think that it must go back to the days when the French set in the fort what we used to call a " hundred-and-one-ton " gun, and I imagine that the wreck of the village would probably result the first time they ventured to fire it. I hunted about for anything that would suggest Greek days, but beyond a pathway, evidently carefully constructed of heavy stones, and now overgrown by bushes and fragmentary rocks, I could see nothing which seemed to suggest so early a date. From Six-Fours one has as magnificent a view as one could ever wish to see, though of course along the eastern Riviera the views from the hill villages are famous, and rightly so. Here one looks eastward to Toulon and its bay, and the eye follows not only the peninsula of Giens, but also the golden islands of Hyères. Westward, one looks back at the hill of Riou, standing out white in the open sea. The bays of Sanary, Bandol, and La Ciotat open before one till the Eagle's Beak comes and cuts off the coast line.

Sanary is a primitive little place, and it is quite a business to buy a stamp at the post office. In endeavouring to do so, we found ourselves blocked by a man who wanted a postal order. They had got the postal order, but they could not part with it because he had not got the right money, and they had no change on Mondays. Some one else before us was after a receipt stamp, but he was told quite curtly that he must go and get it at Toulon. Some English ladies were frantically endeavouring to telephone. They had got the wrong number, and being unable to extricate themselves were severely reproved for their incompetence. Ultimately the stamps were produced, but the requisite number of centimes had to be made up in the most complicated manner by buying three or four stamps for each one that was to be used. At lunch in the excellent hotel where we stayed, and where I broke my rule of not going to an hotel that contains the name " Grand " in its title, we had

snails as evidently a great delicacy. This was my first attempt with French snails. They fill the shell with chopped spinach or some other green vegetable, which makes the snail less inviting to look at, but certainly more palatable. It was also rather a shock to be called upon to eat boiled eggs for dinner. Sanary is certainly not yet a centre of international cooking.

La Seyne is, of course, a busy little offshoot of Toulon. I had the good fortune of seeing there a *pastorale*, done possibly in rather an amateur fashion, but nevertheless, with all the usual accompaniments, and with quite excellent acting and staging as well. La Seyne runs its own little *pastorale* company but I am not sure whether it was this company whose performance I saw. The various *pastorales* differ very much one from the other, and it is quite a study to go into the different types. An attempt at the history of the *pastorale* will be found elsewhere in this book. But there are certain points on which one can reckon. Somebody is blind, or blinded, and receives his sight. There is always a Bohemian, or a gipsy, who becomes converted at the end of the piece. There is also somebody, who in this case was the servant of the farmer, who is the fool of the piece, and who yet plays all sorts of odd pranks upon many of the other performers. There was an amusing scene where the old farmer and his wife, coming to the manger at Bethlehem, dressed in all their best clothes, and with the most absurd and ridiculous gifts, debated with one another how to approach the Holy Child. They concluded at last that they must make set speeches as the Mayor would have done, and a laughable scene ensued, where magnificent attempts at the most high-flown French were interspersed with lamentable breakdowns on the part of both speakers. There was not any sign of irreverence among the audience during this scene, by whomsoever the performance was done. It was evidently on behalf of the parish because the *curé* and his assistants came in and chatted with the audience. Somehow, in Provence they seem to be able to do these things—which, with us, would mean nothing but irreverence—in the most reverent possible spirit.

Toulon is fortunate in its surroundings. On the bay is the sheltered Tamaris and Les Sablettes, and the peninsula that stretches out towards the eastern side of the bay. Near though these are to the great city, they are quite as charming as any of the other little holiday centres upon the coast. One can

RUE DES PORCHES, HYÈRES

cross to Toulon from La Seyne by ferry steamers, and by steamer, also, one can go to Tamaris and Les Sablettes. Most people who have been in these parts at all will know well the quay at Toulon, with its row of shops stretching almost down to the waterside. From Toulon one passes on to Hyères and the sea coast of the Maures. People call this sea coast in these days, the New Riviera, as we may call the part west of Toulon the Unknown Riviera. But the whole of the coast is pleasing, and one could hardly make a mistake in choosing one's resting places.

Through Toulon we soon reached Hyères, where the Illustrator soon got to work in the fascinating old town on the hill, chiefly in a singularly dirty and picturesque street called Rue Paradis.

Hyères has, of course, its ordinary charms to the regular Rivierists. They boast that it is sheltered from the mistral. My own experience is that the mistral blows, if ever wind did, where it lists ; that it gets in wherever it wants to, and round any corner which may happen on its way.

Anyhow, it was not the ordinary attractions of Hyères which appealed to either of us. My companion was all for smelly streets, and I for the sea and the hill-villages. To the sea I went, and gazed on the Golden Isles and strange rigs beating about the bay. To the hill-villages I went, and clambered up narrow twisting streets and watched a winding procession of acolytes go off below to meet and escort the dead, and looked again on the more distant sea and the isles, and found old bits of castles and stony traces of the inevitable Romans. Of the hill places near Hyères, La Garde, the home of Jean Aicard, is as good as you can want. One may stand on the summits of many such a village and picture the inrushing Saracens, the hasty defence, the capture, and the looting. "Whenever you see a head, hit it," said the Irishman ; whenever you see a hill-village or town, climb up to it, say I ; you will always be rewarded. Perhaps the most charming touch in them is the way in which the little houses cluster closely and snugly together ; no outliers there, to be the first prey. They seem to have been almost thrown at one another.

The visitor who hurries on to Cannes will not loiter round the charming coast line which runs as far as Fréjus. From Hyères there are, of course, plenty of char-à-banc excursions both along the coast and in the Maures. But it is best to work on foot as far as possible. Leaving therefore my companion in

his beloved Rue Paradis, I made my way along the coast, stopping here and there and working the bits that seemed to appeal most. Plenty of people stay along this littoral, but I heard very little of my own tongue spoken. My companion sent me off to Cavalière, where on a previous visit he had descended from the train, believing himself to be at Cavalaire. Lost and luggageless, he had been well received, and he sent by me greetings to the hostess of the hotel which had taken pity on him. It was a charming walk, and I arrived very hungry indeed, and gloating somewhat at the thought of the fleshpots before me. But when I got there the cupboard was bare; the hotel was busy a-renovating, and all I could find was a doubtful-looking café which seemed to promise little better than biscuits. There I went and prayed for food, and spent a *mauvais quart d'heure* consigning my fellow-traveller (no doubt at the moment battening at his hotel lunch) to comfortless places. Then lo! a door opened behind me and I was called to step into a comfortable room with a cloth laid, and some sort of prospect of provender, though the knife and fork (being only one, of course, of each) gave nothing away.

In humbler hostelries (for which I always make) I usually, after the soup, ask to be allowed to give my compliments to the cook, who is often Monsieur himself: this time I thought best, under pretext of rinsing my hands beneath the kitchen tap, to give my compliments before I had tasted the cooking. So I found, not Monsieur, but an aged crone stirring some witch's brew of macaroni that smelt divine, and justified the extravagant praises with which I buttered her handiwork in advance. I need not have troubled; they led off with a great plateful of Cap Nègre oysters, a broiled fish to dream of (not "after"), some of the delicious witch-brew, and cutlets such as Paris, the shepherd of Ida, and the three goddesses might have shared and enjoyed (had Paris only cut the apple into three); with wine that was more than ambrosial. So much for Cavalière; I shall never doubt in France again, and I paid but the price of "sausages and mashed" in a London A.B.C.

After lunch I rambled off to see the only "show" the place provided: a modern temple of Hercules erected by an archæological lord of the manor. The temple, built according to learned research, was interesting, the views magnificent, and the lord himself finding me, and seeing me versed somewhat

in these matters, showed me much kindness and hospitality taking me among his many varieties of wattle, and ultimately desiring to send me to my halting-place in a swift car. But I was stepping westward, and wanted to enjoy to the full the golden glow of the Isles of Gold.

The Isles of Gold, as we now know them, were once called the Stoechades, and they make a chain of over twenty miles long, but with entrances between them to the coast. There are several sheltering places for ships at different points, especially at the end of the peninsula of Giens. The highest of them is Portcros ; the largest is Porquerolles. They are now nearly deserted ; there are hardly a thousand persons in all the little archipelago. People have questioned why they have earned their title of the Isles of Gold. Some place here the fabulous gardens of Armida, and so they became the Isles of Gold from the orange groves that once might have been there, but anyone who has walked from the east towards the west in the light of the setting sun could have no thought of doubt why they are called the Isles of Gold. One sees them altogether bathed in gold.

Portcros is rich in springs and grows many vegetables. The little isle of Levant has only the coastguards for its inhabitants. Its riches, so far as it has any, lie in its mineral wealth.

Bormes is pleasing, set in its wooded crescent ; Le Lavandou (nothing to do with washing, but with the wild lavender that grows therein),[1] with its fisher huts and boats ; Cavalaire set in its splendid bay ; Gassin, most striking of hill-villages ; greater places, like St. Tropez ; little odd hamlets like Ramatuelle—you will find more than enough to delight you, especially if you work them as far as you can on foot, and keep your eyes wide open for unexpected antiquities and little vignette-views which seem to open everywhere.

Being given to hill-villages, I made off for Grimaud, which, with the old Saracen fortress of Garde-Freinet, is one of the best specimens. At Cogolin I was proposing to push straight on, but a friendly postman, with, no doubt, his own axe to grind, subtly insinuated that I had best fortify myself for the climb by lunching first. Seldom did tempter have an easier and less repentant prey ; I lunched and lunched well, with a light and harmless wine grown on the slopes, and delicious, as so

[1] On this point, however, authorities—the joint authors of this work, for example—differ.

many of the wines there are, with a suggestion of flowering herbs, where sucks the bee.

Mistral has warned us not to look for "types"; but so near to Gassin and Garde-Freinet I was on the look-out for something Saracen among the women, who keep so much more clearly than men the outward characteristics of race, as do the women of Arles the Greek features and carriage. My waitress, however, good looking, kind, and attentive, was what we should call in our own country pure English, blue eyes, flaxen hair, *Angla et angela.* She was puzzling; but in a moment of inspiration I gave an order in Italian, and sure enough she was of Piedmont. I did not see any marked Saracen types that day, but I may as well confess I did not reach Garde-Freinet, not by reason of the hospitality of Cogolin, but of the hard necessity of catching, in evening time, a train.

Grimaud was all my fancy had painted it: its streets, castle, arcades. I spent, however, some little time over a side issue, as I found an old painting stopping a gap in a henhouse door. It was a Holy Family on the way to Egypt, and the weather had left nothing but the donkey, who, after all, played an important part in the flight. Misliking that it should stay there, I made inquiries, and ultimately conducted a correspondence with a local artisan, with the result that all that remains of the donkey (the picture was off an old clock-case) now remains with me. The artisan was businesslike and honourable, and the cost, with transit, was negligible.

The train that deprived me of Garde-Freinet took me to Fréjus, home of the excellent Agricola and perhaps of the admirable Roscius Otho. Its Roman remains are not perhaps as massive or as picturesquely grouped as elsewhere, but they are more varied. The little oval vignettes one gets through the Fréjus arches are quite attractive. The theatre is in process of cleaning up: but the great gate,[1] and the structures of the port are excellent. A small boy kindly came as my guide; the poor child was evidently told off to this fatigue fairly often; but he held up bravely, even when it became obvious from my "pumping" questions that I was the hated thing of all boys—a schoolmaster. At the aqueduct—again, a most picturesque one—he seemed to break down somewhat, and so I soon, with much gratitude, dismissed him home. I agreed; of aqueducts as of many things (even amphitheatres), there comes satiety at the end. The most interesting part of Fréjus is that part

[1] "Golden" is no doubt a popular error. It is probably *de l'Aure*.

of the ramparts which bordered on the sea, as it then was; these ramparts are (or appear to have been) also the quays and dock walls of the old port. They have chambers for storage here and there. The question of the port has been much discussed. Either the entire sea came right up to these walls, or a canal was cut, and large open basins and docks formed.[1] There were two lighthouses, it seems: the Phare and the Lantern of Augustus, an octagonal tower of about thirty feet.

There is a fine old cathedral, and a very ancient baptistery considered to be of the seventh century; but I cannot help thinking that it is an ancient temple of some sort. The columns at least belong to an older building. It was the scene of a pleasing incident—one of those which come too rarely in this life. While waiting for the sacristan to show me over the cathedral, I got mixed up in a baptism going on in this ancient building. The sacristan motioned me to stand by him till he should be at liberty. A baptism with us is usually quiet save for the baby, and it is a popular relic of superstition that the baby's yells signify the expulsion of evil spirits. At Fréjus the evil spirits are outside, and one might think that most of the demoniacal forces from below were raging about one. They are, in point of fact, the cathedral choristers and other ragamuffins waiting for the exit of the party and the scramble for the coin of the realm which the proud father must scatter—for twins, no doubt, double. It was a wild scene, through the baptistery grille, and reminded me of the mob of children at a Roman wedding clamouring to the bridegroom to "scatter nuts."

The short ceremony over, the nervous young papa tried to press a few notes upon the priest, who was, however, proof against simony, and waved in the direction of the sacristan. Him the young man rewarded, then seeing me, and clearly saying inwardly "Another blooming sacristan!" he manfully plunged his hand into his pocket, prepared for all things. Much waving of deprecatory hands followed, and he departed with Madame and the baby Agricola, drawn by an old horse whose life might span much of the period back to the real Agricola. Too late I thought what I might have done—followed to the cab with hat upraised, and producing from *my* pocket sundry notes of the Republic, begged to be allowed to

[1] On these and similar matters I have my views; but the learned can easily pursue the subject.

start a consolidated fund for the infant (they were humble simple people), or, diverting the horse to a neighbouring jeweller, pinned on the baby's breast some gewgaw of coral: so had I cemented the Entente solidly enough to resist the worst that politicians can do to rend it. But I thought of none of these things at the moment. One never does.

MAURIN DES MAURES

Those who wish to get any real idea of the Maures mountains, to breathe their very atmosphere, without the toil of a lengthy excursion among them, should certainly read Jean Aicard's "Maurin." The story is woven round the usual French love-motif which to many English readers is tedious and to many others often appears bad art. But it is with Maurin's exploits, his influence, his fine points of poaching honour, that the true reader will concern himself, and Maurin's only possible setting is in the mountains from which he has his name. As we read, we are clambering amid gullies, diving down gaps, swinging ourselves from ivy-branch to ivy-branch down walls of awkward precipices. Here there is an unbroken stretch of undulating mountain, there we catch the gleam of some little Chapel of our Lady on the topmost height; here a small farm in a clearing, there a wide expanse of glorious view over an azure sea and golden islands.

The author has woven in many delightful touches of Provençal life and character—chiefly in the form of tales, of which one or two are *vieux jeu* to many English readers. The best are those two which illustrate the curious ideas about strikes and the curious fear of rain in the Provençal mind. A house is being built. One of the labourers smoking a large pipe lets a great cloud of smoke arise therefrom. "A cloud! a minute more, and it will rain!" he cries. The building work is deserted; every one turns to play bowls (the great Provençal game, played with heavy iron bowls) and every one except the owner (the contractor was of Provence, and it all seemed natural to him) was pleased. The owner, irritated out of patience, called for less peaceable workmen; there was at once a strike of all the bricklayers in the country. The house belonged to those who had begun to build it, said they; no one else should finish it. A sort of riot was quelled by the capitulation of the future owner of the house,

and an eloquent, if homely, speech by a very curious character who is the hero of another story, and eked out his existence by pronouncing heartrending discourses at funerals, for a fee always proportionate to the pockets of the relatives.

There is another charming story about rain. A yearly festival used to take place at the Chapel of St. Estrôpi, standing on a terrace which dominated a wide valley. The worthy Vicar used to say Mass first, and then lead the faithful in procession along the terrace. On this particular festival day it was raining; only the few inhabitants of the castle were there and one stranger.

The Vicar spoke with sorrow of those who might have attended, with the mere simple help of an umbrella, with joy and pride of those (there was only the stranger) who had braved, with an umbrella, the asperities of the day.

Then tapers were distributed, and the Vicar led his flock to the chapel door. Alas! a fine rain was falling. "Still raining!" he cried. "St. Estrôpi will pardon us; we will finish our prayers in the chapel!"

There is an interesting note on vine-growing. Before the phylloxera, vines were grown which needed little care; it was a Golden Age. Now, with the American vine, all sorts of things have to be done; the peasant groans and despairs, he thinks Mother Earth niggardly and unkind; he drifts into towns, into factories, and lives in some great building of cheap flats.

True! but fortunately a good many remain behind, and those who remain behind still keep the same "Provençal soul" which inspires the quaint and often touching anecdotes of the book. There is the story of the poverty-stricken family which caught a hare—a veritable godsend—but it was clear that the hare was nursing a nest of little leverets; a long discussion takes place; pity overcomes hunger; the hare is untrussed and bolts in a flash to its nurslings. There are plenty of "galégeades"—what we should call "leg-pulling stories"—accompanied with a great deal of vain-glorying; there is the excellent tale of the family whose fortune was built on two Labrador ducks which never saw Labrador—the real and original ducks having by an oversight been roasted and eaten—everybody who mattered being perfectly aware of the substitution, but all combining to keep it dark for the honour of the neighbourhood and of Provence.

There is much that we chould call " Irish " in all this, and it has all the charm of Ireland. But the book must be read by those who want to get the true " feel " either of the Maures or of the people who dwell in them. The sequel, " L'Illustre Maurin," is a good story, but not so good a picture.

CHAPTER XI

AIX, SALON, AND MARIUS

BESIDES its magnificent carved doors and fine stone doorways, Aix has a great deal of interest of other kinds. It is full of history, and even if now it has come to be rather a quiet well-behaved little place, reminding one of a small cathedral or university town, it retains quite enough monuments and signs of its ancient history to be worth quite a long study. Its history is a long one. Before the time even of the Gauls there must have been some very early native people in this part of Provence. And how far back Aix may go we really cannot say. We are still awaiting an historian who will tell us a great deal more than we know now of prehistoric Provence. At least we find Aix bursting into history when Marseille was being threatened by the people called Salluvii. Marseille appealed to Rome, and the Romans, under Sextius Calvinus, attacked the barbarians at a place which ultimately became Aix. It was Sextius who is said to have discovered, as indeed he might easily discover, the warm and other springs at Aix, and so the place was called after his name.

The Romans set to work and built what must have been quite a fine town. Twenty years afterwards came along the inevitable conqueror Marius, who, as every schoolboy knows, won a great victory somewhere near Aix, and when his legions were resting from their campaign, he employed them in ornamenting and completing the colony. Aix became a Roman favourite. Cæsar, during his conquest of Gaul, followed the example of Marius. Well into the time of the Empire Aix retained her place as chief favourite, and shared with Nîmes the glory of the great arenas and gigantic theatres. When the Roman Empire began to break, Aix, lying as it did on the great Aurelian Road, was exposed to attack, and suffered indeed the attacks of the different tribes of Goth, Lombard and others. The whole town was destroyed again and again, and its inhabitants carried off. It was under Charlemagne that Aix began to look up again.

From somewhere about 880, for six hundred years, Provence lived its own life independent from France, and Aix was its capital. The people of Provence can never forget that Aix was a royal town.

The Saracens sacked the town in 730, and it was only with difficulty that Aix pulled itself together again. The Counts of Provence, and chief among them Raymond Bérenger, who was busy in attacks upon the Moors, brought Provence and Aix again into some sort of prominence. The Count himself was really only first among his equals. He was surrounded with other nobles who were in their own way absolute monarchs in their own little spheres. Bérenger II was, with his uncle, Count of Barcelona, for regent and guardian, the successor of Bérenger I. Catalonia and Provence were at this time, therefore, joined together, which gave an added strength to the province in its constant difficulties with the Count of Toulouse. But it was the third Raymond Bérenger who, in 1216, made a great effort to unite his province again under one sovereignty. He married Beatrice, the daughter of the Count of Savoy, and with the help of his father-in-law, and with a great deal of quiet patience, he managed to uplift again his ancient house. It was he who was helped in this great work of building up again the Provençal people by the mysterious Romée of Villeneuve, of whom Dante speaks in his Divine Comedy, and about whom so many legends have woven themselves.

This last of the Bérengers was indeed a very great sovereign, and, as is well known, his four daughters all became queens. It is said that on his deathbed he foresaw that despite the exaltation of his four daughters, his own death would really mean the death-blow to the independence of Provence.

The House of Anjou was from that time onward only paving the way for the fusion of Provence with France. Every one has heard of the Good King René. Of him we shall have something to say later, but he thoroughly deserved the name of "the good king." In his youth he saw a great deal of severe military service. He had many distresses—public and private—during his reign; he taxed heavily, and on occasions he was guilty of massacres, but none the less he really did try, so far as it was possible in those troublous days, to be a father of his people. He showed the greatest possible interest in all the doings of the humblest of his subjects, and was a great patron of commerce and agriculture. He stands, as everyone knows, looking down the Cours Mirabeau holding in his hand

a bunch of grapes—a testimony to his enthusiasm for the cultivation of the ground.

We need not follow the further history of Aix. Though it was rather a sad one—there were all sorts of wars: civil wars, wars of religion, and various small private quarrels. It was not till well in the seventeenth century that Provence and Aix were able to rest at last. It was then that Aix felt secure and began to build those splendid houses and fine halls which so delight the tourist of to-day. It was then, also, that Aix developed its University, and became a centre of learning. Though perhaps its history has not been very stirring in the last two hundred years, it has been able to develop itself quietly on its own lines, and has acquired that charming atmosphere of a peaceful old-world city. The oldest of its buildings is the cathedral, part of which goes back to the eleventh century. If it is not as magnificent as many of the northern cathedrals, it is none the less an exceedingly dignified one, and enshrines the memories of many centuries of Provençal life.

There are some fine churches besides; the Church of the Priory of St. John of Malta is a charming thirteenth-century building. The Hôtel de Ville of the seventeenth century is a dignified building, and close by is the old belfry of the fifteenth century. There are fragments of the old ramparts of the town of the fourteenth century in the park of the Baths Hotel. The old octagonal tower is dilapidated but still impressive. But we have already seen the real interest of Aix lies largely in its magnificent private houses, mostly belonging to the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Not only are they fine in themselves, but the doorways, in which they seem to have specialized, make quite a study on their own.

Aix is naturally well supplied with fountains, and one can go and get one's shaving water in the street.

There is, of course, a fine Library, which is filled with documents bearing upon the history of Provence. The museum is, as one would expect to find it, one of the richest of France, and the building is the old Priory of the Knights of St. John. As one enters the hall, apart from a large number of extremely interesting inscriptions, there are some admirable remains of the Gaulish period. These are without doubt the fragments of some trophy, possibly to celebrate a victory of the Gauls over the Ligurians. It is not easy to say what the

heads are meant to represent,[1] but evidently they suggest in some way or another a very crushing victory. It is said that though Gaulish in origin, they show a certain amount of Greek influence. There is some good Greek and some good Roman sculpture, and a representative set of French sculpture from the Middle Ages to the present day. There is, besides, quite a fine picture gallery. But besides the main museum, and the Natural History Museum, there is an extremely interesting museum of tapestries and furniture in the old palace of the Archbishop. In the fourth room, where it is said that Louis XIV and Condé were reconciled in 1616, there is some fine tapestry representing scenes from "Don Quixote," which would make charming illustrations to the book.

Those who want to study the history of Provence generally, could not do better than stay a week or two at Aix, though a good many weeks could be so spent, and study at the Méjanes Library, or at one of the other libraries with which Aix is furnished.

As a general tourist centre, Aix is to be very highly recommended. It is a centre of particularly interesting country, and full of memories of the Romans, especially, of course, of the great Marius. At Vernègues there is a delightful little fragment of the temple called the Temple of the Low House. It stands prettily amid trees and shrubs ; two of the columns survive, and quite a considerable amount of the foundations. Or at Valabre there is the hunting lodge of King René. At Roquefavour is the great modern aqueduct which gives water to Marseille. At Vauvenargues there is the fine castle with fourteenth-century towers, of which one portion is thought to have been part of a Roman fort. The name is well known through the celebrated philosopher who was born at Aix in 1715. Then there is the mountain of Sainte Victoire, on which are the remains of a convent of the Calmadules. The victory was of course the great victory of Marius, which probably took place in the village which now bears the somewhat gruesome name of Pourrières, from the many dead of the Barbarians that lay upon the battlefield. Later we shall consider the strategy of Marius which led up to this battle, but there seems no reason for disputing the claim of Pourrières to be the site of the battle. There was evidently a pyramid set upon the battlefield to keep green the memory of Marius' great victory.

[1] One stone, perhaps, cavalry ; the other, chopped-off heads of captives.

Thoughts of the victory sank deep into the hearts of the people whose deliverance it had wrought, as we see from an old custom at Pertuis which took place every 24th of April.

The procession marched from Vauvenargues towards the mountain, a bonfire was lit, and the peasants danced a farandole, shouting " Victoire." On their way back to Pertuis they carried boughs and branches. Then next day the *curé* of Vauvenargues led his people to the curious abyss called the Garagai, down which Marius is said to have thrown three hundred prisoners after the battle.

Readers of " Anne of Geierstein " will remember a scene which takes place on the balcony of the convent on the Mount of Victory, where there is an interesting account of this mysterious cavern. Not far off there is a ravine, whose name suggests that there was some small Roman temple. On the southern slopes of the mountain there are ruins of a Roman aqueduct. It is possible to combine the visit to Vauvenargues with that to the Mount of Victory. There is a capital bookshop at Aix, as one would expect, and there all sorts of guides and maps can be had.

Something of the story of Mirabeau, whose statue stands in the court of the Hôtel de Ville, at least as regards his domestic entanglements and disentanglements, is told, with much sparkle and gaiety, by Sir Frederick Treves in his " Riviera of the Corniche Road." His sister, Louise, Marquise de Cabris, was a termagant of an extreme kind : she was indeed " the terror of Grasse," where she lived ; her beauty, brilliance, and wit supplied scandals enough not only for Grasse but for all Provence. Mirabeau always came to her when in doubt, and in return for her counsels she made use of him to avenge her on some of the people who had said nasty things about her. For one assault, on the Marquise's neighbour, the baron of Monans, Mirabeau got " two years in the second division " in the Château d'If. We must try to think of him, when we see his statue at Aix, rather as the brilliant orator than as the (more than once) eloping lover.

Sir Frederick incidentally gives a pretty picture of the ruined Ursuline Convent at Sisteron,[1] where the wild and

[1] In this description, charming as it is, I find certain grave difficulties ; and, indeed, cannot help thinking that the author was really describing not the Convent of Ursulines but the ruined Church of St. Dominique on the left bank of the Durance, with the remains of prioral buildings alongside. Perhaps (though I cannot find any such evidence) the Ursulines once occupied these buildings. It may be that the Chapel

quite unconscionable Louise was immured by her father the Marquis, until she breathed so much impropriety and sulphurous talk about the holy walls that the nuns must have been glad enough when she bolted, in man's attire, to aid her scandalous brother in his latest escapade.

Salon, like so many of the towns of Provence, is divided into two towns, old and new. It lies at the foot of a hill, on the top of which is a thirteenth-century castle in which we are shown the room of Queen Jeanne. The old town has kept some of its ramparts, a sixteenth-century gate, tower, and some fine houses. The Church of St. Michael is of the twelfth century, and it has a fine Romanesque porch. The new town nevertheless possesses the old Church of St. Laurent, in which is the tomb of Nostradamus. It has also a fine bénitier, a sixteenth-century statue of the Virgin, a fourteenth-century group of the entombment of our Lord, and other treasures of great interest. At the Hôtel de Ville is a Roman milestone, and there is a statue in front of it of Adam de Craponne, who brought the waters of the Durance to Salon by the canal which bears his name.

So much absurdity has clustered round the name of Michael de Nostre Dame (Nostradamus) that a short note may be helpful.

Michael was the son of Jacques and Renée of St. Rémy, and was born at St. Rémy on December 14, 1503. His grandfather Abraham Solomon, a learned astrologer, was caused to be baptized by King René as "Pierre de Nostre Dame."

Michael studied at Montpellier, where one can see his signature; he travelled, and began his "prophesyings" early. The young Henri IV he desired to see naked, that he might tell his fortune. The boy refused, fearing a spanking, and terrified by the prophet's flowing beard. But having looked for a moment at the prince, at length reassured, he prophesied that after many troubles he would yet succeed Henri III. This was accounted a very telling prophecy.

The prophet sat usually in a bronze chair, with a basin for a footstool, and a wand covered with herbs and flowers. He

alluded to by Sir Frederick was really the choir (now a dwelling) of the church. Hare's description of Sisteron is also a little puzzling, and, at first sight, he seems to place this ruined church on the right bank. But one must get into the position from which he made his sketch of the town and citadel. He would have the campanile of St. Dominique in his left foreground.

was clearly a fine-looking old man. He had remedies against fever and complexion-salves, details of which he kindly published.

But he excelled in "Old Moore's Almanacks," and many of his prophecies seemed to be strangely fulfilled. He died and was buried at Salon in 1566. His brother Jehan was a poet and musician, and collected a mass of stories to illustrate the History of Provence, published in 1575. Much besides he left to his nephew César, who wrote the "History of Provence." (Sir T. A. Cook, unless I misunderstand him, attributes this to the great Michael.)

RENÊ'S FESTIVAL

Even the great Festival of the Tarasque was nothing to the festival, also established by King René, at Aix. One must remember that in those days there were very few amusements for the people, who were a thoroughly hard-working, busy race, and they had no such excitement as people may have at the present day, whether in England or in France, of joining in, or at least going to watch, some great football match, and it seems quite clear that René definitely desired that his subjects should let off a good deal of steam in the curious festivals, partly religious, partly pagan, and partly inspirations on the spur of the moment, which he so much encouraged in his dominions. It was far better that people should be allowed their amusements and jollifications under order and regulations, than that they should run about foolishly like hooligans and break each other's windows, or even heads. Besides this, the tourist traffic was not altogether unknown even in those early days, and the wily king almost certainly hoped to attract a large number of people to the different centres at the time of their great festivals, and to encourage trade. There was always a great deal to be done in preparation for these fêtes. The great corporations or guilds which represented all the different trades were busily occupied in the elaborate preparations for the festival a long time before. At any rate it would occupy their thoughts for a good part of the year. It was these corporations and guilds who were apt at times, like the modern trade unions, to be a little troublesome, even to an enlightened government, and the festivals of Tarascon and Aix were by no means the only ones which René directly, or indirectly, encouraged. They were also exceedingly popular

in the South. The Southerners have a kind of instinct for processions which we northern people hopelessly seem to lack. Everybody, therefore, was pleased, and all was sure to go well. The Revolution put an end to all, or nearly all, these ancient festivals. Some have been revived, as at Tarascon, and to a certain extent at Aix, as part of the great Provençal Renaissance. Some, like that of Saintes-Maries, have gone on, no doubt, unbroken. It may seem to us that the length of some of these festivals would make them wearisome, but when we consider their obvious purpose, and that the longer processions were held in the greater centres, we can find some method in this as well as in other kinds of madness.

The festival of Aix worked up to the day of Corpus Christi, but it began on Whit-Monday. On this day they elected the Prince of Love and the Abbé of Youth, as well as other dignitaries of the festival. There was also to be elected the King of the "Gown-and-Wig." On Trinity Sunday the second part of the ceremony took place. A solemn procession was held the evening before, and the Prince, the King, and the Abbé went round to warn all the authorities that the festival would take place the next day. One need not follow these three chieftains in the various ceremonies which belonged to them, but it was on the day of Corpus Christi itself when the main procession took place that was so curious a mixture of Christian and pagan ideas. First there was the Pasado, or small procession, which was really a series of ceremonial visits to the various dignitaries. At ten o'clock in the evening the procession itself began. First came Fame, riding on a horse with four attendants guiding it. Fame was clad in a yellow robe with the arms of the chief families of Provence upon it. Next came the Duke and Duchess of Urbino, whom René is thought to have pilloried in this way since the Duke of Urbino had been despatched by Pius II to attack René's own son, the Duke of Calabria. The Duke and Duchess, therefore, were merely there to be made fun of. Next came Momus, the god of satire, and then came Mercury, the god of commerce and of thieves. Naturally after him came Night.

The fourth group consisted of representations of the Infernal powers, with the four strange and unintelligible people called the Razcassettos, who may possibly have been meant to represent in some way the lepers so often mentioned in the Gospels, or it is perhaps a little more likely that they were merely there to make more ridiculous the Duke and Duchess

of Urbino, who preceded them. Then came an astonishing scene representing the Golden Calf of Mount Sinai, with the figures of Moses and Aaron following. As if René desired to have as much mixture and confusion as possible, the next personage were Pluto and Persephone, surrounded by four evil spirits whose gambolling and playing was reckoned one of the sights of the festival. After them came further evil spirits of the realm below, who were tormenting Herod, wearing a magnificent crown and carrying a sceptre. It was the business of Herod to defend himself manfully against the evil demons who were threatening him throughout the procession with their pitchforks, and this scrimmage was reckoned, perhaps, the greatest of the attractions in this curious moving procession.

Next came the gods and goddesses of the sea riding on horseback, a detail which puzzled some writers not aware perhaps that the horse is constantly associated with the sea, possibly because of what were called the " white horses " which came along with the rising breeze. Next came the curious mixture of elves and nymphs with Pan and Syrinx, and then naturally would come the car of Bacchus, and other of the pagan gods and goddesses. Then, with the love of confusion and mixture which animated this wonderful festival, came the Queen of Sheba on her way to visit Solomon. After her a group of dancers, and then came the greater gods of Olympus, along with Venus, Cupid, Laughter, Jokes and Delight. These were little children with wings. A gloomy trio closed the procession, namely, the Three Fates.

The next morning of the procession itself came a curious performance called " The Tournament of Armetto," no doubt a representation of evil temptations trying to harm and destroy the human soul. Special ceremonies too long to mention were connected with the King, the Prince, and the Abbé, and about half-past two in the afternoon came a solemn mystery. The procession this time was entirely Christian. It was supposed that the Mass of the morning had dispelled completely the gods of heathendom. One would see the Three Wise Men going to Bethlehem, and other stories from the Gospel were acted. Then came the Apostles, and next, the saint who is never left out among a working people, namely, St. Christopher. The third mysteries were meant to represent the splendours of the Church. All the guilds were gathered together with their banners, and pretty well the whole of the population

must have been engaged in this procession, so that there could hardly have been left anyone to look on. But so many of the people as were left out of the procession itself fell in behind, separating off into three little groups, and giving representations of whatsoever it was that they found most appropriate to their work in life.

The whole ceremony was closed by the planting of may trees in a *Place* in the town.

Aix was not the only place which had a splendid festival on this day. In fact there would be few places that had not a procession of some sort. At Draguignan they also had special ceremonies in which many of the Gospel stories were acted in the streets. Modern attempts to represent these ancient ceremonies have, of course, been only partially successful.

MARIUS AND THE BATTLE OF AIX

As Aix is so closely connected with the name of Marius, it may be interesting to try and give some account of the strategy which caused him to fight his great battle not far away from it.

The invaders had crossed the Rhône, as we have already seen, at Tarascon. It was a convenient place for crossing, partly because of the little island in the middle of the river, and partly because the inhabitants there were experts at getting across the river on rafts. The Romans made great use of these raftmen, and one can find plenty of inscriptions still—for instance, at St. Gabriel and also on the Island of St. Honorat—which show that they were enrolled into a regular corps. It is quite clear, as is shown by Sir Theodore Cook, that there was a great deal more water between Arles, or even between Tarascon and the sea, in those days than we have now. That is why the incoming hordes were obliged to cross the Rhône a good way north ; and they were also kept away from the sea during the whole of their passage across the Crau.

Marius had determined on no account to hurry an attack. He was waiting until he got his enemy into a convenient position so that he might annihilate them completely. He did not wish to make a bad job of it. He had plenty of time to make arrangements for provisioning his troops, which was an extremely difficult business. It was for that purpose that he constructed his well-known canal, which I imagine to have come from somewhere near Arles to the lagoons which stretch north of what is now the Lagoon of Galégon. (In this I do

not follow Sir Theodore Cook.) Marius actually allowed the enemy to march past his camp, and managed to persuade his men to swallow the insults that were hurled at them, in silence. Possibly he delayed attack in order that his troops might get accustomed to the general appearance of these Barbarians before he attacked them. They followed along through Lambesc and arrived a little west of Aix, Marius following close upon them but not yet attacking. Ultimately an attack was forced upon him as both armies were using the same river for water, and in this the Romans proved easily victorious, though they really only dealt with the rearguard of the main Barbarian army. It was the panic caused by this action that made them hurry on beyond Aix. The Ambrons, who had been the defeated forces on the River Lar, joined the unbeaten Teutons whom Marius had worked somehow into the precise position that he had desired for the engagement. This is the view that is taken by M. Gilles, who has made a special and careful study of the entire campaign.

Now came the crowning achievement, and we must try to get a fairly clear idea of the exact position of each army. The Teutons had clearly been scared by this defeat of the Ambrons, and also by the news that Marius was following hot-foot. They evidently made up their minds that the thing had better be fought out at once, and oddly enough that was precisely the conclusion Marius had also come to. The Barbarian line ran more or less north and south, the southern part being based at Pégière, and the northern being in a line which would bisect a road from Pourrières to Puyloubier. They therefore had a strong position on the plain on both sides of the Lar, and they had sent on all their baggage wagons to Pourrières, which they thought would be quite safe from the actual battle. Unfortunately for them, they had not taken sufficient care to spy out the movements of Marius, whereas Marius himself had kept a constant watch on their minutest movements.

The Roman army was thrown out in a similar position, running almost parallel to that of the Barbarians. But three thousand picked troops had gone from the Roman main army to Pain de Munition on the previous evening. In the morning Marius made a kind of feint attack with his cavalry. The Barbarians were already irritated enough with the defeat of their rearguard, and they most incautiously pursued the Roman cavalry, coming right up to the Roman entrenchments. Marius had spent a good deal of time in fortifying. Apart

from his camp he had evidently done a good deal to re-fortify the old fort at Pain de Munition. This he ultimately used, not as a final refuge, but as the pivot for the turning movement of Marcellus. Possibly the Barbarians had not expected to find an entrenched camp. At any rate their waves came up and broke again and again upon it. It was just when they were feeling their disappointment at its height, and wasting themselves in fierce energy for a final attack, that the stroke of Marcellus came off. He had worked his way to Pourrières, where he found all the baggage wagons, women, and children, quite undefended. Those who were in the wagons fled at once towards their army, meeting the waves just thrown back from the ramparts of Marius' camp. The Barbarians therefore made their own confusion, and the Romans were able to inflict the severest possible defeat upon troops that were now thoroughly scared and disordered.

It was on the field of Pourrières that the worst of the butchery took place. The nearest mountain, as we have seen, was called at once the Mount of Victory, and there is to be seen there the well-known precipice called the Cleft of Marius—the Garagai—down which he is said to have thrown three hundred of his prisoners. A monument was erected south of the river of the usual pyramid type,[1] which is still to be seen on the arms of the village of Pourrières.

So much for the great victory which has been called the Victory of Aix. A full account of Marius' movements will be found in Sir Theodore Cook's work, which goes, as we do not in the present work, quite deeply into the geography, history, and archæology of Provence. Our purpose here is rather to suggest, so that the travellers may make, as far as possible, their own studies. Sir T. Cook's work is based, as most modern accounts of the campaign and battle are based, upon the work of Gilles, and it is largely to Gilles that we owe the very fascinating theory that in the Christian legend of Mary and Martha, who are said to have come at an early age to Provence, we have merely a reflection of Marius and the Syrian prophetess of whom we read in Plutarch. Of this legend I have already spoken, but I think it is important to remember that history is not without its coincidences, and that the change of Marius—who in popular language seems to be known rather as Gaie or Cai, and not so much as Maie, which survives chiefly in place-names—into Mary—change of sex and nation-

[1] Like that at Vienne, no doubt.

ality and age—is a very remarkable one indeed. In any case one would have an almost unique instance of a double survival, for Marius has naturally survived also as himself, and it is extremely difficult to understand why he should have been split up into two so different personages.[1] Had the memory of the man himself been wholly lost it would have been different. The supposed change of Julia his wife into the other Mary is even more unintelligible. And Martha, the prophetess, though she did no doubt play a part in assisting the plans of Marius by working on the superstitions of his troops, and possibly of himself, is quite a shadowy character, and, furthermore, if this identification is a true one, the whole story of the Marys should be centred further north round about St. Rémy and Maillane, possibly even near Aix itself, or at any rate at the point east of the Rhône where Marius had probably landed, say at Fos. But Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer is a great deal too far west to have any definite link with Marius at all. This does not prove the old Christian tradition to be right as it stands. There has no doubt been a great deal of blending, and a good deal of accretion. But, after all, the other members of the traditional band of Marius have yet to be accounted for, and if the theory of Gilles, which is ardently backed up by Cook, is right, it is, perhaps, the most astounding transformation in all history.

[1] In *modern* popular talk one does, it is true, find Gaie and Maie separated, as if they were different personalities.

CHAPTER XII

GOOD KING RENÉ AND THE TROUBADOURS

ANY account of Aix, and indeed of Provence, would be sadly incomplete without a short sketch of René of Provence. He stands looking down the Cours Mirabeau at Aix, holding in his hand a bunch of grapes; and this must not suggest that he was a Bacchic sovereign, a sort of King Trinculo, but rather that, as his own Ministry of Agriculture, he encouraged his people in the growth of the vine and whatever else the soil of Provence might profitably bear.

René has suffered much from the reputation of a *roi fainéant*, a *petit roi d'Yvetot*; and though critical history has put him in his right place as an enlightened monarch (he was really no more than Count of Provence), the father of his people, it has also shorn him—or attempted to shear him—of a good many of his academic and artistic achievements. The "Coronation of the Virgin" at the Hospital of Villeneuve-lès-Avignon, which will be shown you as René's work, is not his, but probably by Enguerrard-Charonton.[1] None the less, it is most likely that René did himself paint, as he did certainly compose verses; that he was an enthusiastic patron of the arts, and wished to make his Provence famous in them all, is quite certain.

René was an example of what is rather rare; a man who in many respects failed and was disappointed, but yet made good, and consecrated the latter part of his life not to nursing grievances or lamenting over his might-have-beens, but to doing his best for the people whose allegiance remained to him, and whom he certainly endeared to himself by a wise, affectionate, and judicious care.

Louis II of Anjou, René's father, was a staunch friend and ally of the unhappy Charles VI of France, his uncle, afflicted by mental sickness. Louis stands out in honourable contrast

[1] The contract for the picture has been published, and settles the question.

to other princes of the unfortunate king's following. It was in the Castle of Angers that René was born in 1408. His mother, Yolande of Aragon, was certainly a good mother to this her second son, whose birthday was but a few months after the assassination of the Duke of Orleans, by which France was plunged into a mourning which was perhaps unmerited, and into fears which were fully justified. With René's childhood we are not concerned; let it stand to his credit that he never forgot, and richly rewarded, his nurse, a woman of Saumur. As the boy grew up he was attached to his uncle, the Cardinal Duc de Bar, from whom he received an enlightened education. On one journey to the Court René is said to have had lessons from Hubert and Jan Van Eyck. By the Cardinal's manœuvring and persuasion, René was betrothed to Isabelle, daughter of Charles of Lorraine, hitherto no friend to the house of Anjou. This was a great tribute to the high opinion in which René was held.

The young prince's early married life was spent in the turmoil of petty wars which then divided and devastated France. He had many successes, but success brought him jealousies and fresh dangers. For a time, however, the "monstrous crow" of the English invasion caused the French princes to forget their quarrels, and rally round the weak Charles VII for a final effort to drive out the foreigners. But the rally received a shock in the "Battle of the Herrings," and it was the peasant girl of Domremy (she just missed being one of René's vassals) who raised the siege of Orleans and had the weak king crowned at Rheims. It is said that Jeanne asked that René might go with her at the head of her troops to the camp of Charles VII. Probably René was present at her famous interview with Charles of Lorraine; but he certainly did not accompany the Maid, being called off, by one of the still-recurring little wars, to Metz. But he no doubt commended her to his mother Yolande, mother also of the Queen—Marie d'Anjou—and Yolande nobly championed the village heroine before the court of Charles and her daughter.

The story which follows is well known and we must not here pursue it. Only we must not forget that René proudly assisted at the coronation of Charles, the unworthy husband of his beloved sister, whom, alas, he did not meet at the ceremony; a sorrow to three persons above all—Marie herself, René, and Jeanne d'Arc.

We will not linger over the events which brought René and the army of Lorraine into conflict with Burgundy. On June 30, 1431, René (perhaps owing to his own chivalrous impetuosity: certainly the sage old warrior, Barbazan, counselled delay) was heavily defeated at Bulgnéville, and himself, despite his own bravery, and Barbazan's heroic efforts to make good a lost cause, was taken prisoner. He was taken to Dijon, where he at once built a Chapel of Notre Dame and St. René, his patron and name-saint. Left a good deal to himself, he studied painting, music and poetry, and—it is said—painted the windows for his new chapel, in which was a portrait of himself. These windows were broken up at the Revolution, but the remnants were carried off by English travellers. I cannot ascertain if they survive. Possibly René's portrait adorns some little parish church, or some private collection. Liberated at the prayers of his Duchess and of Marguerite de Bavière, though on hard terms, René went to Bar, and rendered thanks in the Church of St. Nicholas-de-Port. But we are really concerned only with René in Provence, to which he retired finally after failure of his efforts to serve his Kingdom of Naples. In 1437 he disembarked at Arles, welcomed with joy by his Provençaux, as he was to be mourned with deep sorrow when death parted him from them. Passing to Aix and Marseille, welcomed with a true southern warmth, he settled at Aix, where in the choir of the cathedral he swore to preserve the privileges of the ancient church.

In 1443, after a fruitless visit to Naples, we find him at Tarascon, where his castle stands proudly on the Rhône. Interrupted by a sojourn in Angers, his residence in Provence was resumed after the visit to Toulouse and elsewhere of the Dauphin, none other than the wily Louis XI, who was no doubt pretending religious zeal in order to gather supporters in the south in the hope of shaking himself free from his father's irksome authority. He visited, with great devotion, the sanctuary of Sainte-Baume, prayed at the tomb of St. Martha at Tarascon, and generally took in the good Provençaux, who saluted him with cries of "Noël! vive lou daouphin!" René meanwhile was holding high festivals at Saumur, leaving in December for Provence, where quarrels had broken out between Aix and Marseille. Early next year (1448) he made his memorable visit to Saintes-Maries, where he caused the supposed relics of the saints to be removed from their resting

place on the sea-shore to the fortress-church. It is said that he conferred the name of "Saintes-Maries" on the village, and gave to it its arms of a sailless ship bringing the saints to shore.

It is from this period that René's work of reviving and stabilizing the rules of chivalry belongs. At Tarascon he held a magnificent festival or *emprise*. The winner at the jousts was to receive a kiss from a shepherdess whom one cannot but suspect to have been Jeanne de Laval, René's wife to be.[1] It would be pleasing (but lengthy) to describe this festival, of which we have (as of most of René's *emprises*) the fullest details.

Let us hasten to say that it was not merely love of pageantry which stimulated those jollities. René believed that they were most valuable as a training for the youth in religion, courage, loyalty, and gentleness. To this end René composed his famous Book of Tourneys, instinct with the spirit which animated his revivals of chivalry.

In 1474 René, despoiled of Anjou by the wily and unprincipled Louis XI, is back in Marseille, having just given in marriage his granddaughter Jeanne with a dowry of Martigues, Berre, and its inland lake.

René is at last at home; he gives himself to the simple life which always seems to have been his longing, encouraging agriculture and viticulture, introducing new fruit trees, planting a model garden, where he loved to roam, bringing into the country new kinds of game, attempting to grow the sugar-cane, and reviving, with his queen, Jeanne de Laval, the Golden Age for his beloved subjects, who alone had been for him no source of disappointments or sorrows. Like a benevolent Haroun al-Raschid, he wanders among the shepherds in the valleys, only revealing himself by an overliberality, paying their debts, dowering their daughters, and encouraging them to dance farandoles to the sound of the *galoubet*. He writes a pastoral to describe in veiled words his love for Jeanne de Laval. With her he goes a-hunting, St. Rémy way, sometimes at Mirabeau on the Durance. In 1474 he celebrated the famous "Festival of the Tarasque" and founded a fraternity "of the Tarasque." At Aix he kept the Fête-Dieu, with wonderful ceremonies, some of which have

[1] The marble mask at Villeneuve-lès-Avignon (see p. 18), which I was told was of Blanche of Castille, is possibly a portrait of Jeanne de Laval.

survived to this day, and of which many were curiously wild and pagan.[1]

During these later years René's activities were numerous enough. Our interest will chiefly be in those which specially affected Provençal development. We leave aside therefore his paintings (certainly some are on record), his writings and his gardenings. He was a great archæologist, and (it sounds odd for those far-off days) a great reviver of old customs, and ready to introduce new ones, if they made for the true spirit of chivalry. It may surprise us to find that "Valentines" began in England. So at least it seems, from a poem written in captivity by Charles of Orleans. Each Valentine's Day there was a drawing of lots; each chevalier drew a lady; they were united to each other through the year as "Valentin" and "Valentine," and were bound by bonds of mutual help and regard. This pretty custom would suit René's book admirably. René was also a collector, one who laid the foundation for archives and museums. He is said to have written a guide-book ("description") of Provence; he studied too the drawing of maps, and was, in fact, a royal Baedeker. He encouraged towns and districts to write up their stories and retain their old customs. One wonders how he found time to be, as well, an administrator; but he kept a good hold over his judges and magistrates; he arranged for those who had no relations to plead for them to have guardians; he solved the old question "*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*" by keeping a sharp eye over all guardians, and seeing that they fulfilled their trusts. He did what he could to check profiteering, and he would have suppressed Monte Carlo with much promptitude. He assisted weaving and cabinet-making. When a question of precedence among ladies arose, René ordered the Archbishop of Aix to attend the next ball and lecture the assembled dancers on what was, and what was not, right and proper in this matter. He encouraged "morality plays"—the only drama of those days. He is said to have been one of the first to introduce musicians in church services.

Allowing for the habit—especially in Southern France—of magnifying the popular hero, it must be allowed that René was a sovereign of multiple—and beneficent—activities.

In the plague visitation of 1480 René showed practical charity towards the sufferers. Broken by the spectacle of

[1] The procession is described on p. 112.

daily sorrow, he himself took to his sick-bed, and began to prepare for his end ; crowds pouring into the churches to pray for his recovery. "Pray not," said René, "for the body, but the soul, the soul!" On July 10, at Vesper time, he gave up his breath, having lived sixty-two and reigned forty-seven years.

We need not dwell on the depth and sincerity of the public mourning. The commonest of his people pressed to see his body, and his funeral ceremony was celebrated in the presence of an immense throng, doubly sad in that his remains were not to be buried among them but at Angers, by Isabelle his first wife. A touching inscription was set up on the Cenotaph in his own land, of which these are extracts :

Unhappy, he found happiness only among the Provençaux.
With others he found a wavering loyalty, in Provence it never wavered.
He found all he had lost in the affection of the Provençaux.

His monument at Angers was destroyed in the Revolution. Perhaps his best monument is an extract from his will :

The said lord directs that the alms usually distributed at funerals of princes shall (to avoid injustice or accidents) be divided in four parts :
To poor girls for dowries.
To poor sick folk.
To poor thieves.
To hospitals which are short of bedding and linen, provided (Oh, the wily old René !) that this sum go not to the treasurers of the said hospitals but be expended by special executors.

We have a portrait of Jeanne de Laval in the great triptych in the cathedral at Aix, where she is kneeling surrounded with her patron saints, and opposite to King René. The little pavilion at Les Baux belongs to this Queen Jeanne, and not to the earlier Queen Jeanne of Naples.

THE TROUBADOURS

Provence is, as every one knows, the land of the troubadours. It is not altogether easy to say what a troubadour was, but I suppose we may find the origin of the troubadour poetry in the passage from the popular epics which belonged to an early period of literature, and to the lyrics, which, along with

ballads generally, were the next stage. The name, no doubt, is a simple ordinary name for a poet—the man who could find out, the creator—and we have therefore to form our own definition of those whom we call by this special title. Although the first, at least the first that we know of, was William of Poitiers, somewhere about the year 1100, he shows us at least that there was growing up a popular poetry which was already marked by the aristocratic tone that we shall find in all real troubadours. Some of the writers of this early stage were actually nobles. There were even kings among them, and that is why their poetry is always tinged with those strains of chivalrous and courteous verse, which mark throughout the true character of troubadour poetry. But there was more than that. The troubadours were artists; the types of their lyrics varied considerably, but none the less they always had conscious artistic ideals. Besides that they were always poets of love, not of passionate love, but of the love of chivalry and courtesy; the stately love that we find not only in their poems but in the old legends of the time. There were, of course, other types, but they have disappeared. We find only here and there relics of them, but this is the proper form of troubadour poetry, and it is this that Southern France gave to the world. Bound up as the poetry of the troubadours was with chivalry it died with chivalry too. We can hardly say that it lasted beyond the early parts of the thirteenth century. In its brief life the poetry of the troubadours, which is the early poetry of Provence, gave to the world nothing very original and nothing strikingly beautiful, but none the less it did lay the foundations of lyric poetry upon which those that came after might build. They took the only motive that was open to them in their own days; they reflected the manner of their time; they set before an ignorant people a charming and beautiful ideal. In doing so they did a great kindness to European literature. It will always be the boast of Provence that she gave the lyric to Europe.

As we have seen, the early troubadour poets were nobles, princes, and even kings. Rudel, the hero of the haunting legend of the distant princess, who sailed off that he might set his eyes upon her, and smitten with mortal illness on the voyage, only just set his eyes upon her and died in her kind and sympathetic arms, was a noble. The last of the early troubadours is a veritable Debrett. But there were others, who, coming from the people, sang perhaps in more popular

strains, but none the less reflected the same theme which their betters had used. Rudel was not the only hero of a charming story, nor William of Cabestagne the only hero of a tragic one. He was slain by the lord of the castle of Roussillon, who reaped a horrible vengeance upon his no doubt innocent wife for the love that the troubadour had expressed in his chivalrous poems. The story is that the lady, after her ghastly meal, cast herself down from her window into the moat below. A pilgrimage was made year by year to the church of Perpignan where the lovers were laid to rest.

Here is a pleasant picture of another—a troubadour of low birth, learned, and with plenty of native wit—one Giraut of Limouse. All the winter he used to stay at school and acquire knowledge, and in the summer he went from castle to castle taking with him two *jongleurs*, who sang his poems. He never married, and gave all that he made by his minstrelsy to his poor relatives and to the church of the parish where he was born. These *jongleurs*, who were at first the attendants of the troubadours, became at last their rivals. A *jongleur* must have a long memory and be skilled in playing on musical instruments. Often a good *jongleur* would become a poet himself, and some troubadours, on the other hand, were also *jongleurs*.

We have here no space to speak of the different types of troubadour poems, but what is most interesting is their common theme, of which we have already spoken. The service of love, as it was called, by which love had become a kind of cult, was without doubt an imitation of the service that every one owed in those days to his overlord. The parallel between these two services—the voluntary service of love and the feudal service to the overlord—is constantly drawn. The troubadour becomes the servant or vassal of some high-born lady; he dedicates to her his poems; he makes to her his oaths of fealty. It was all very charming, very harmless, and in a way very unreal, but it was the other side of the service that was paid to the lord, the honour and reverence that was given to his lady. One must remember that the great lords were frequently absent from their castles and their domains in those days, and that the lady of the castle would actually represent to those who lived about it the sovereign power. Sometimes they were called upon to fight, and therefore it was easy to elevate the natural obedience

which all the vassals must give to the lady in the absence of her lord into a sort of religion. That is what the troubadours did, and what we call their love is simply the expression of their loyalty. This loyalty is expressed again and again in the highest possible terms of reverence. Chivalry had become a part of their religion. We can feel sure that despite a good deal that nowadays seems a little too easy-going among some of these early poets, this elevation of love and loyalty had an excellent influence over the manners of the time. This kind of love had its laws and its principles. It brought into the life of the day something of the harmony and the order which is the purpose of government. The art of love was studied and little codes were drawn up to show how love and courtesy should always work together. The only reward to these humble servants, the poets, that the lady of their choice could give was to permit their love in this most limited and guarded sense. It was part of the game that the troubadour should suppose and pretend that he had suffered indeed the sorrows of some real love, the object of which was beyond his reach. There was, therefore, a slight sad and melancholy tinge even in their most ecstatic declarations. Here is a passage from Rigaut :

I am sad and merry.
Sometimes I sing, sometimes I lament.
For love in my heart is split into a love of happiness and gloom.
Love shows me all its noblest qualities in the midst of laughter and of tears.

One of the earliest of the troubadours is one Marcarbrun, a Gascon. Nobody really knows much about him ; he is stated to have been discovered laid at the door of some rich man, but he was trained by the poet Cercamon—a name which was given to him because he had traversed a great deal of the world, and spent much of his life in going about. Of Marcarbrun we have a handful of poems. There are some which we can understand quite easily ; at least one charming romance, and one or two delightful pastoral poems, but a good deal of what remains is entirely unintelligible. He is a curious troubadour, and in a way may be said not to come within our definition of a troubadour at all, because he held strange ideas about love, which was, of course, the true theme of the troubadours. Marcarbrun will have nothing to do with love ; he has a violent aversion to it. One cannot tell at this distance of time whether the poor poet had had some reverse

which had blighted his heart, but for some reason or other he would have nothing of it in the ordinary way. Possibly if we understood more of this troubadour we should understand that when he quarrels with that love of which the rest of the troubadours so constantly sang, he is really trying to point out that love is in itself much more sublime and real than as it was sung of in the popular poetry of the day. At any rate, he is a strange character to find among the early love poets of Provence. But there is one poem of his that is particularly interesting because he sent both the poem and the melody to a brother troubadour of quite another type—Geoffrey Rudel. We have already mentioned Rudel; he is the hero of the charming and romantic adventure of the Distant Princess. But this idea of the distant love appears again and again in the poems of Rudel. We do not quite understand what he means by his expression "distant love," but apparently he is trying to express for us something far away beyond and above our ordinary thoughts and ideas, something much more spiritual, much more ethereal than what we might call love close at hand. If Marcarbrun despises love, Rudel certainly idealizes it. He wants, as he tells us, to love without hope of being loved back again. There is, in other words, something thoroughly mystical about the love of Geoffrey Rudel.

We must not here follow the history of the different poets who succeeded Rudel. Some made no great name for themselves, but one—Arnault Daniel—has been made famous by the words of Dante. "He was," says Dante, "the greatest artist in his mother tongue, whether in romances, or in verses of love, he surpassed all others. It is only foolish people who say that Giraut de Bornelh was a better poet; such persons judge according to ordinary talk, but not according to the truth."

We next pass to a troubadour bishop—Folquet. He, too, was honoured by Dante. He places him in Paradise, and Petrarch quotes from him in his "Triumphs of Love." He was not a Frenchman but an Italian who came to live at Marseille. He was rich and adventurous, and had been inspired by his fellow-countryman from Genoa—Arnault Daniel. He travelled in the East; one of his songs tells us how he went to pray on Mount Carmel. He, too, came back to his beloved Provence, though he passed some time at the courts of different kings, among whom was Richard I of England. He had his

love affairs like most of the troubadour poets. One was a curious business, for he pretended great affection for two ladies to conceal his real affection for their sister-in-law. He only brought a good deal of domestic confusion and trouble upon Azalais, to whom his poems and his affections were directed, and as she would have nothing to say to Folquet, things came to rather a deadlock. Folquet's poems take at this period a melancholy turn. "I have so much love," he says, "and yet I have never been loved." When not only Azalais, but King Richard, Count Raymond and King Alfonso, all his patrons, died, Folquet entered a monastery, and it was not long before he was put in charge of a rich abbey, and he ended his life as Bishop of Toulouse. He gave himself to a very penitential life as bishop in order to make up for what he considered his earlier follies, and it is said that if he ever heard one of his own poems sung that belonged to the days of his worldly life, he used to put himself on bread and water for a day. In fact he carried this self-denial so far that even once at the court of a French king, when a travelling *jongleur* sang some of his own poems, the bishop refused to taste any of the delicacies that were set before him, and completed his meal on dry bread.

Besides Arnault Daniel and Folquet there were other great troubadours in the best or classic period. We should always remember that the troubadour poetry did not only deal with love ; though clearly that would be its chief subject. But the grouping of these poets into a single school depends rather on their circumstances than on the particular style which they followed. It is difficult to give a clear definition of the word "troubadour," though the origin of the word itself is simple enough, but a troubadour might certainly be a poet not only of love, but of war, and as we shall see later, he could be a satirist too, or a religious poet, without ceasing to be a troubadour.

A great poet of war was Bertrand de Born. He was no poor singer but overlord of Haute-Fort, where his castle was true to its name—both lofty and strong. Bertrand was mixed up in a great many political troubles of the time, but his chief delight was in warfare, and it is of war that he has sung most. Bertrand went to Normandy to the Court of the English King, Henry II. He had a sort of idea that there he would find the same delights and the same luxuries as in the south of France.

"We want," he said in one of his poems, "people to be liberal and we want people who laugh." Poor Bertrand soon had his cold douche. He almost died of weariness among the dull English. He even meddled in squabbles among the princes, the oldest of whom was very jealous of his brother Richard the Lion-Hearted. Bertrand tried to urge the elder son Henry to break into open revolt against his father. Henry drew back at the last moment, and Bertrand addresses him in most scathing words, but later a reconciliation was made, and Bertrand writes a very stirring poem to wipe out all taste of the first one. "I sing," he says, "for the King has begged me to sing. I sing the war and the sport that I see is opening up before us. When the game is over we shall know to which son the land shall belong."

However, the young patron died early in the struggle. Poor Bertrand was sincerely distressed. He writes two very beautiful dirges which breathe a genuine sincerity not always common among the troubadours.

Bertrand was besieged in his castle by Richard Lion-Hearted and was obliged to surrender. He was called to the tent of the King, who met him with severe reproaches. The King upbraided him and told him that he had lost completely his senses. "I have indeed," said Bertrand, "lost my senses of knowledge and thought since the day when your brave son died." The King is said to have fainted with grief and emotion at hearing these words, and when he came to, he pardoned Bertrand, gave him back his property and his castle, and even a recompense for the damage that he had suffered, a story which no doubt had Dante known, he would not have written as harshly as he did of Bertrand de Born. However, we are concerned not so much with Bertrand's doings as with his poetry, which is very live and vigorous. War is what he wants; war and the tumult of arms. He is one of the most genuine of all war poets. Here is a scrap of one of his best eulogies of warfare:

I love the sweet season of Easter, which makes the leaves and flowers to grow.
I love to hear the happiness of the birds that fill the woodlands with their songs.
But I love to see in the meadows the tents and pavilions all set up.
I love to see in lines throughout the countryside the knights and their armoured horses.
I love to see the skirmishers put to flight those who rob their property.
I love to see following after them a huge mass of men at arms.

I love to see strong castles besieged, fortifications broken and hurled down,
And the army there upon the bank, with its ditches and palisades of stout stakes.
Neither eating, nor drinking, nor sleeping gives me such joy as the war cry
"Up! and at them!"

There were also women troubadours, and one of the best known of these was the Countess of Die. These poetesses are generally very direct, and certainly have all the appearance of sincerity. They do not care for the tricks of poetry, or for that strange "obscurity" which seemed to be a special joy to some early writers of troubadour verse. As far as craftsmanship goes, the poetesses are far behind the poets, and that makes it seem that what they did write was all the more sincere. The Countess of Die was equal in birth to her contemporary, the Count of Orange, and her poems are chiefly busied with telling us of her love for him, a love which seems at first to have met with sympathy.

"I am happy," she says, "to know that he whom I love is the bravest chevalier in all the world. I pray God to give great happiness to him who has attracted me towards him. The woman who holds fast to good fame must set her affection upon a brave and valiant knight. Once she knows his courage, let her not hide her love, and when she loves thus openly the brave and noble chevaliers will only speak with sympathy of her love."

Here we almost seem to hear the voice of Miranda in "The Tempest." However, trouble came along soon enough, and we follow in the songs of Beatrice the Countess the sad little romance.

"I then see," she says, "that which I had never wished to sing, for he whom I love has caused me such deep sorrow. I love him with a perfect love, but in him I find no help, either of pity, or courtesy, or beauty. I have been deceived and betrayed. Surely you should have looked on my merits, on my high birth, on my beauty, and even more on my perfect heart. I send you this song to take to you my message. Tell me, my sweet friend, why you are so hard and cruel. Is it pride, or is it hatred?"

Certainly this little poem seems to breathe the very sincere outpourings of a wounded heart. There is a little of Sappho in it.

Pierre d'Auvergne belongs to the end of the twelfth century,

BEAUCAIRE

and so he is a contemporary of Giraut de Bornelh. He was learned and handsome, much in favour with the great barons and high ladies of the time, reckoned to be the best troubadour till Giraut appeared on the horizon, very proud of his talent, and somewhat contemptuous of his brother poets. Like other troubadours, he had intended himself as an ecclesiastic. He was a canon, but his brother poet tells us he never was really at heart an ecclesiastic. He was always a *jongleur*. He is bold enough to say that before him no really perfect verses had ever been written. This kind of boasting is usual among the troubadours, but Pierre is not in the least afraid to repeat it. He, also, is fond of the "obscure style," the dark and riddling style that became an affectation of these poets. Like many of his brother poets, he was a great traveller. He went to Spain where there was a King who not only was chivalrous and a good patron, but also was extremely liberal. He writes some quite charming and gracious poems; one of them is in the familiar setting wherein a nightingale is bidden to take the poet's message. "Nightingale," says the poet, "thou shalt see my lady. Tell her what I feel, and let her tell thee what she doth feel, but mind that she keep thee not, but let thee fly back to me." Off flies the bird straight to the place where she is queen, and when he sees the lady appear in all her beauty he sings gently and softly as when evening is falling, and then he tries to speak:

He who loves you bade me come and sing to please you.
If I can take him back a happy message, you too must rejoice,
For never lived a man who loved you so dearly."

Happily the lady is able to send a very affectionate message indeed, and the nightingale comes back at full speed of its wings to tell the poet of his happy adventure. The pleading of the bird for the poet and the charming answer that he brings back have something of very genuine poetry in them.

Peire Vidal was of Toulouse. He travelled, perhaps perforce; we find him at Genoa, but his thoughts are with Provence.

I breathe the wind that comes from Provence;
All that comes from there gives me joy.
And when I hear good news of Provence I smile as I hear it.
For each word they tell me I want a hundred,
With such joy do they fill me;
For I know no such sweet place to abide

As lies between the Rhône and Vence,
Between the sea and Durance.
No place is so bright with happiness.
In that noble country I have left my love,
With her who gives happiness even to the most unhappy.

He was a fantastic, strange character. When his patron died—Raymond V of Toulouse—he wrote no dirge, but is said to have cut the ears of all his horses, and shaved the heads of all his servants, to express the depth of his mourning. Sometimes he sings of war almost as Bertrand de Born. He becomes quite violent as he marches to the war.

When I have my double breastplate upon me,
When I have girt upon me my sword,
The earth trembles. We love not peace,
And no name so proud but leaves me at once a free path.
So do they tremble when they hear my steps.
In violence I equal Roland and Oliver.
It is my violence gives me my fame.
There come flying to me messengers
With a gold ring, or a white or black ribbon,
Whispering messages which make my heart rejoice.

Peire, always athirst for adventures, went off with Richard the Lion-Heart to the Holy Land. At Cyprus he married a Greek, supposed to be of royal birth. Peire, on the strength of this, called himself Emperor, and demanded that all should call his wife the Empress ; so at least we are told, and certainly he was equal to any absurd fancy.

The troubadour poetry really began to flag with the great crusade against the Albigensian heretics. Into the history of this special time we need not go, but it had an immediate effect upon the literature of the age, and gave a very bitter and satirical turn to the poetry of the troubadours, which had mostly so far dealt with love or war. It is for this reason that the period of the crusades is really a period of decadence in the poetry of the South. It is not that writers were less sincere than they had been before ; one may rather think perhaps it was the other way. But passions had been stirred up and feelings roused that before had been dormant. These expressed themselves in satire, and scathing moral or didactic poems. Some spent their virulence upon the crusaders themselves, some on the clergy, some on the papacy. Among these poets of the crusade period one finds some of the very earliest anti-clericals. But besides this, there were no

longer the splendid patrons of before. The upper working-class and the merchants had gradually been acquiring more and more power in the towns and districts, but it was especially in the big manufacturing towns that the power of the nobles was sinking, while nobody had yet arisen to take their place. Then it was considered a shocking thing, as no doubt it was, that a crusade should be raised by Frenchmen against Frenchmen. This new heresy, as it was called, was spread through a good part of Provence, so that these wars and troubles came home to every one in the South. There was a terrible massacre at Béziers; Carcassonne was ravaged; Simon de Montfort was here, there, and everywhere, breaking down the great fortresses and committing all sorts of cruelties. It was no time for the poetry of courtesy. Just here and there, like birds in a storm, a poet or two raised his voice, and presently in place of the lyric of older days a bitter satire arose against the crusade and the crusaders. Here is one—Bernard de Marvejols—lamenting over his beloved Provence:

Ah! Toulouse, Provence, land of Argence, Béziers, Carcassonne,
How I have seen you once, and how I see you now!

It is Peire Cardenal who lifts the poetry of this period on to a high and dignified plane. His eloquence is vigorous, his satire is biting. Like Marcarbrun, though he is a troubadour, he cared not for love. In fact he attacks love in the bitterest possible way.

I hold him but a fool who makes alliance with love.
The more one trusts it, the more unhappy one is.
One thinks to warm one's hands at the fire of love
And one is scorched and burned.
The gifts of love come late, its miseries come every day.
Fools, traitors, deceivers, they are in the company of love.
I shall not join them.
Never have I gained so much as when I lost my beloved.
In losing her I gained myself whom I had lost.

The chief themes of Cardenal are love of wealth, the desire for amusements, the constant triumph of injustice, covetousness, falsehood, and the general decay of manners that was abroad. "I weep for the world," he cries, "where there are so many rogues. Men live there in such error and perversity. They think that vices are virtues, and evils are good. Brave men are slandered, cowards are praised, the evil ones are reckoned as good, and wrongs are benefits."

Sometimes in Peire one almost hears the deep organ-tones of

Milton. "The clergy," he cries, "are shepherds and seem to be saints, but they are but criminals. When I see them robe themselves it reminds me of Isengrin,[1] who wanted one day to go into the sheepfold, but for fear of the sheep-dogs he clothed himself in sheep-skin, and then destroyed those whom he would."

In some ways we hear in Cardenal the voices of Wycliffe, Hus, and Savonarola, and though he marks the beginning of the end, at the same time there is something very admirable in the sincerity and depth of his burning words.

The next stage of troubadour poetry is religious, and many of the best of these religious poems are by the Bishop of Toulouse—Folquet—of whom we have already spoken. But Peire Cardenal himself is one of the best of these religious poets. He is so serious that sometimes he says the oddest possible things. In a prayer, for instance, he prays, "Send me back where I was before I was born, or else pardon me all my sins, for had I not been born I never could have sinned."

But the type of poetry which is of greatest interest for the development of literature in Europe is the lyrics which Cardenal and others wrote in honour of the Virgin. The interest of them is that they repeat almost word for word the love-poems of an earlier date. We hear once more what has been lost awhile—the tones of chivalrous love with something of passion vibrating through them. The same thing was happening in Italian poetry—this strange reversion to type—and the poems of earlier days gave a new depth and dignity to the poetry of Provence during these its later years. The deep religious tone engrafted upon the words of an earlier time must, in some sense, have paved the way to the great religious poems of later time, whether in France or Italy.

We ought to say something of the last of the troubadours. Though Provence was the true centre of troubadour poetry, there were also troubadours elsewhere. Sordello was one. But the last troubadour was quite properly a Provençal. He was born at Narbonne about 1230. His name was Riquier, and one can see in him already the decadence of the poetry of courteous love. He left his native place of Narbonne to try to find some powerful protector. He even went up to the north to present himself to the King of France, St. Louis, but the King of course thought poetry was nothing but a frivolous art, and there was no room in a French court for a poet of a

[1] The Wolf, in the Roman de Renard.

different language. Paris, in fact, was not the literary centre of France in those days, so our troubadour had to turn elsewhere, and he found a better reception at the court of Alfonso X, known as the Wise King of Castille. He tried there to do something in the way of organizing the different types of poets. He wished, in fact, to make poetry a department of its own, and would admit to the title of poet only those who had a very special right thereto. This had already begun in Germany, where the poets formed their corporations like other people, especially, as we know, among the master-singers of Nuremberg. Riquier was obliged at length to leave the court where he was so happy, and as he says pathetically, since losing the splendid king who was so kind to him, he had never found anyone else to appreciate his gifts. He was a proud, vain man, but one feels rather pleased to think that the troubadour poetry came to an end with one who was so much of an enthusiast for his art. He is rather an adept in style than a poet in the true sense, but he writes a good deal of graceful verse, some of the best being his pastorals. Most of his poems are addressed to some lady whom he entitles "Beau Deport," possibly the Viscountess of Narbonne, who is addressed by other poets too. One sees in Riquier the transition from the simple poetry of the troubadour school to the greater works of Petrarch and Dante ; at least Riquier had the sweet new style. It was time for the last of the troubadours to pass away when Petrarch and Dante rose on the horizon.

Of course, we must not claim too much for these poets of Provence, but it hardly seems exaggeration to say that they are the vanguard of the poetry of modern Europe. In other parts of the world the same sort of movements were going on, but Provence was certainly ahead of them all. Dante himself most graciously attributes something of his own inspiration to the early troubadours ; and the troubadours of his own country, without any doubt, owe much, if not of their inspiration, at least of their style and poetical atmosphere to their predecessors in the South of France. All readers of Dante know to what a lofty place he exalts Sordello. No doubt Dante throws about Sordello a special halo because he was born at Mantua, the birthplace also of Vergil. The real Sordello is hardly worth Dante's deification. The fact is that though he was, as one of his biographers tells us, a good troubadour and a good singer, he was not altogether a very

reliable character in the ordinary walks of life. A scandal of his earlier days made him flee to Provence, and as he was bitten with the travel-fever of all the troubadours, we find him in Spain and Portugal too. All four countries, therefore, claim him in some sense. He was a friend of the famous Count Barral of Les Baux. He was away from Italy a long time and only returned in old age to his birthplace. As a poet he is certainly of interest, but he is in no way above the ordinary level. He has an odd, affected sort of way of describing the raptures of love ; in fact he reminds us rather of the seventeenth-century poets of our own country in their fantastic plays upon words—of love possessing one's heart, or of one's heart being snatched from one by the glances of the object of one's affection. One of his poems is written on the little theme " My true love hath my heart, and I have his." None the less, if Dante made too much of him, he was a great link between the poetry of Provence and that of Italy, and in him Dante seems to have seen rather the personification of all that had gone before him than the mere single poet, and that too, one of no special excellence among his fellows. We all know him in the " Purgatory," a proud, disdainful soul, who speaks only when he hears the beloved name of Mantua. It is the thought of Sordello which inspires the famous cry of Dante, " Italy, the slave, the house of suffering. . . ." Certainly it was a transfigured Sordello that Dante has seen, and yet the real Sordello could not have been anything wholly mean or base to inspire such magnificent passages in Italy's greatest poet. We must remember that Dante himself had been a troubadour in his poems of " La Vita Nuova." He certainly follows the style of the school of Bologna, in which one finds many traces of Provençal influence. In Guido Guinicelli, chief among these Italian troubadours, we find a great deal that seems to come straight from the best troubadour poets. It was also from the troubadours that Dante learned that wonderful conception of love as a " precious abstraction," a love that has nothing in common with earthly things, but which has been transformed into something ethereal and heavenly. So it is that Dante unites himself rather to the later school of troubadours, especially perhaps those of the religious period. It was otherwise with Petrarch. In Petrarch something of the old spirit of troubadour love lives anew. Laura to him is not a mere abstraction ; she is real, living. Not indeed exactly earthly, but far removed

from the stately dignity of an enthroned Beatrice. In Petrarch, therefore, the wheel had come full circle. The last of the troubadours was dead many years before Petrarch wrote, but Petrarch lived for many years of his life in a part of the troubadour country where still the atmosphere and inspirations of the old troubadour spirit were all about him. And now it is the spirit of Petrarch and Laura which breathes throughout Avignon and Vaucluse.

We know really little about Laura save what we learn from Petrarch's own poems. All we know is good. Her life suggests that she was under some vow; perhaps she belonged to some minor Order, but certainly everything that was good in Petrarch came from her influence. We do not know even her surname. She was not born at Avignon itself, but somewhere between Avignon and Vaucluse. Learned persons place this spot at a little place called Piéverde, and there Petrarch sees her again and again "like a flower among the grass." Higher critics refuse to accept the old story that he first saw her in church at Avignon on Good Friday, but there is really no reason why the story should not be true. Petrarch describes her as he saw her on the way to church, or perhaps even on the way back. One knows well how on great feast days or fast days every one from the neighbouring villages troops in at an early hour to the church of the nearest town or city. We can see the sixteen-year-old Laura coming in, a mere country girl as she was, in the early morning, wearing rather strangely[1] a green dress, her hair loose—as Petrarch so often sees it—to the breeze which twisted it into myriad knots. It has been suggested that Laura was an Italian in exile like Petrarch himself, but surely Petrarch must have known enough French to speak quite familiarly, at least to a person of education. She had black eyes and black lashes, but golden hair—rather an unusual combination, but one that might be just as well French as Italian. The charming little portrait of her in the Laurentian Library reveals to us her beauty, but not her nationality. She was buried, as we know, in a mean grave, possibly near the village where she was born[2]; at any rate there is now no trace of her supposed grave in Avignon.

It is perhaps none the worse that Laura should have become rather a dim poetic figure than what she was to Petrarch—

[1] For Good Friday—in later days she would certainly have been in black.

[2] Most critics say at Avignon; see p. 18 above,

some one very living and real. She really gains the more she approaches Dante's Beatrice, and from all we know of her, she was certainly not unworthy to stand beside her.

In Spain the poets of Provence also had their influence. At the Court of Alfonso VIII they found protection and encouragement, and later at the Court of Alfonso X of Castille, himself a poet. In Portugal there was also a troubadour poet, King Denis. He is kind enough to tell us that he wrote, or tried to write, in the Provençal manner. Further north the troubadours had their influence too, and we may say, in fact, that this influence has never died. It is alive to-day in Provence itself, thanks to the great renaissance of Mistral and his school. It is a question of interest for those who like problems to ask whether, under such different conditions as these of modern days, the spirit of the old troubadour poetry can in any sense revive again. But certainly Mistral, Aubanel. Roumanille, and Gras have something of the real troubadour spirit within them, and we confidently look forward to more and perhaps greater poets still who will restore to Provence all the splendour of her former fame.[1]

[1] A great deal of the above I owe to the capital study by Joseph Anglade, Professor at Toulouse, in "The Troubadours: their Lives, Works and Influence."

CHAPTER XIII

ST. RAPHAËL TO MENTON

ESTÉREL

THE mountains of Estérel balance in every way the mountains of the Maures, but they are a very much smaller group, and they arrange themselves quite in different ways. The mountains of the Maures are undulating. The beautiful valleys seem rather to surprise you, opening out where you least expect them. They are known for their wonderful blue colour when one sees them at a distance. Estérel is sharper and more rugged ; its rocks have more colour. One gets the deep reds running right down to the water's edge. Bare rocks stand out in beautiful green forests, so that the whole becomes a series of colours. There are two mountains in the background running to a height of six hundred metres.

Estérel must have been a great place in the old days. There never was such a wonderful ground for playing hide and seek, in the days when there was probably more hiding than seeking. Once in one of the rough valleys of its mountains it would be very difficult to be dislodged There are several old fortified places that show clearly how important a retreat it was in the pirate days.

The most picturesque part of the coast is Cape Roux, and the rocks of Trayas. The coast from Cape Roux is now a series of hotels, with here and there country houses.

One comes down at length to La Napoule, and then, stretching before one, is the panorama of Cannes and the islands of Lérins. Travellers do not generally pay enough attention to the interior of the Estérel. The valley of the Siagne is charming, and there is a splendid excursion to the little grotto where St. Honorat used to make his retreat. Some people think that this coast of Estérel is best in winter, with the snow on the mountains forming a lovely background.

St. Raphaël is the first of the little towns of the Estérel,[1] or on the border of the Estérel, lying between Fréjus and Cannes. As we have already seen, the coast of the Estérel is very different from the rather tamer coast of the Maures, and the roads, anyway from the coast resorts, are rather rougher and more precipitous. The actual coast itself is most charming. From beginning to end of the Estérel Massif you get the most beautiful colours, most unexpected little bays, and pines running down to meet the blue of the sea. There is a road that runs along it called the Corniche d'or, or the Corniche of the Estérel, and it is worth taking this coast road (but you must be a good driver, and have a good head) instead of going inland by the finer national road. There is, perhaps, no part of the Riviera —except possibly just round Nice and Cannes—from which the excursions are so charming, as those from the little coast places of the Estérel. One comes first to Boulouris. Near by are great quarries and the blue porphyry. Next comes Agay, an admirable place for the winter, and still, according to report, unspoiled and quite inexpensive. Agay and Le Trayas, the next place of note, are the best centres for working the inland of the Estérel ; and it is worth study. There are forest paths, carefully kept and marked, which take one all over the interior, and leaving one the opportunity, at any point, of dropping down again upon the coast. One of the most interesting of these walks, which one could do with one's lunch in the rucksack, is to the Mal Infernet, a very narrow defile with the river running through rocks of all sorts of odd shapes. To go to Le Trayas, one passes Cape Roux, and from this point the villas and the hotels become a little thicker. It is from Le Trayas that one can make the excursion to Mont Vinaigre, though it can equally be done from St. Raphaël and from Agay. We need not describe the expedition ; it is worth going if only to see the remarkable views, not only over the whole of the Estérel but also as far as Bordighera in the east, and to the Gulf of St. Tropez in the west, or south-west. We come next to Théoule and La Napoule, whence one gets a charming view across the bay to Cannes and the Isles of Lérins.

At Cannes the Riviera proper (or should we say improper ?) begins. Thence onward—though some of these will have

[1] But dare I call St. Raphaël a "little town"? It is soon to have its Casino : and that stamps any place in the Riviera as finished and complete. Visitors need, it seems, something more exciting than the prodigal splendours of earth, sea and sky.

occurred already—you may be sure in abundance of Casinos, noise, Cook's tickets, the vulgar tongue, palms, violet fields, gold lace, long bills, and tough cutlets.

Here is J. R. Green's enthusiastic description of Cannes itself:

> Of these little Britains none is more lovely than Cannes. The place is a pure creation of the health-seekers whose gay villas are thrown fancifully about among its sombre fir-woods, though the "Old Town" as it is called nowadays, remains clinging to its original height, street above street leading up to a big bare church of the Renascence period, to fragments of mediæval walls and a great tower which crowns the summit of the hill. At the feet of this height lie the two isles of Lérins, set in the blue waters of the bay; on the east the eye ranges over the porphyry hills of Napoule to the huge masses of the Estrelles; landwards a tumbled country with bright villas dotted over it rises gently to the Alps. As a strictly winter resort Cannes is far too exposed for the more delicate class of invalids; as a spring resort it is without a rival. Nowhere is the air so bright and elastic, the light so wonderfully brilliant and diffused. The very soil, full of micaceous fragments, sparkles at our feet. Colour takes a depth as well as a refinement strange even to the Riviera; nowhere is the sea so darkly purple, nowhere are the tones of the distant hills so delicate and evanescent, nowhere are the sunsets so sublime. The scenery around harmonizes, in its gaiety, its vivacity, its charm, with this brightness of air and light. There is little of grandeur about it, little to compare in magnificence with the huge background of the cliffs behind Mentone or the mountain wall which rises so steeply from its lemon groves. But everywhere there is what Mentone lacks—variety, largeness, picturesqueness of contrast and surprise. Above us is the same unchanging blue as there, but here it overarches gardens fresh with verdure and bright with flowers, and houses gleaming white among the dark fir-clumps; hidden little ravines break the endless tossings of the ground; in the distance white roads rush straight to grey towns hanging strangely against the hill-sides; a thin snow-line glitters along the ridge of the Maritime Alps; dark purple shadows veil the recesses of the Estrelles.—J. R. Green, "Stray Studies."

Cannes, like Nice and Menton, to say nothing of Monte Carlo, has every prospect that pleases, but is in these days pretty well ruined by the noise of the perpetual streams of motors. Whether in France they hoot more than elsewhere,[1] or whether it is merely that they are all going the same way, down the same roads and streets, I cannot say, but Cannes, both by day and night, can be as noisy as any industrial centre I have ever seen. Of course most people live on its outskirts, but none the less it is always necessary if you want to get to the sea, to pass this zone of noise and clamour, and only those

[1] Hooting rules differ in different countries. In one state of Central Europe you hoot twice for every policeman. In the large towns policemen are peppered about liberally. The result is pandemonium.

with the strongest possible nerves should try and stay there. This is really a very serious drawback to the Riviera, and it is becoming more and more serious as time goes on. Should it occur to those who control these things to standardize the hoots of motors, so that a very gentle hoot could be used as a mere warning that a motor vehicle is on the way, and the loud one only used as a warning to the foot-passenger to jump, perhaps things might be better. But apart from the hooting, there is a constant winding up of unsilenced motor cycles and cars, and this is beyond all ordinary tolerance. No doubt the car has transformed the Riviera and all other travel centres, which means that everything has become easily accessible. One can do twice or three times what one would have done in the old days, and, to put it plainly, the tourist who goes out for a short time and uses cars as much as possible, will get his money's worth very much quicker than he would have done fifty years ago. Instead of the languid wearers of Dundreary whiskers and languishing holders of little parasols driving decorously along the sea coast roads, or through the little hamlets, up to hill towns and villages, we have now both along the coast, and going up into the interior, a constant succession of rapid, skimming cars or motor cycles conveying golfers to distant links, sight-seers on long joy rides, or new arrivals to their destinations. Things would not be so bad if all these good people were not in so desperate a hurry. You would think that to slow down for a little handful of pedestrians, or in order to pass some other car, was as bad as having teeth out without gas. The driving, though always rapid, is nearly always expert, and there are few accidents, but none the less the joy has gone from the road for those humble people who believe, and probably believe rightly, that the way to see a country is to walk as much as possible. The noise of the big centres will no doubt drive people further and further into their outskirts, and possibly the time is not far off when the visitors will dwell mostly on the highlands, and descend only to the coast for their daily walk by the sea.

All writers upon Provence must also make a very emphatic and urgent protest against the dreadful hoarding advertisements that one finds upon the most beautiful main roads. They are there, of course, to attract the motorist. They disfigure greatly beautiful landscapes, and obtrude ideas which one would rather have banished from one's thoughts when

moving through such exquisite country. One can only hope that all motorists, and pedestrians too, will make a solemn vow to consume none of the various commodities which are advertised in this blatant and most unnecessary manner. A large number of them are unfortunately from our own country.

Some people, no doubt, confuse in their minds Cannes and Nice. They are quite different in every possible way. Both have sunshine, but Cannes is much more retiring than her great sister town. Lying, as it does, more surrounded by its hills, it keeps the warmth better, and it has few of the valley winds which come down so cold upon Nice. The sands, also, at Cannes are pleasanter walking, at any rate for bathers, than those of Nice. In a word, Nice is a huge city and Cannes is still a comparatively small town.

Every one knows the story of how Lord Brougham discovered Cannes, then a little fishing village. He went to stay three weeks; he lived there thirty years. And now people flock there from every quarter of the world. There are very few relics of Roman Cannes. We know its name, and there have been found some coins, and so on, but everything was swept away in the great invasion of the Barbarians.

Most people will know the delightful excursion that can be made from Cannes to La Napoule on the west, or as we have suggested, up the Siagne towards the grotto, or towards the Lérins. About these islands there lingers always a mist of legend and tradition. They are stated to have had a good many inhabitants, but the history of the islands as far as we are concerned begins with Honorat, who came to the islands from his grotto up in the mountains, and introduced there a kind of monastic life, that had been known so long in Egypt. He had no real order, no regular monastery, but there were large numbers of hermits in their little cells scattered over the island.

It was from Lérins that St. Patrick came, and he carried out the Lérins tradition in Ireland. In the island the sheltered abbey became a great centre of learning and of civilization for many hundreds of years. Its abbots were well known; many became famous, but in the eighth century the Saracens found the retreat and massacred its monks.

All about the islands were little chapels, but the old building which dated from the time of the massacre had disappeared. There remains, of course, the castle of St. Honorat, which was

built to protect the inhabitants against all the enemies that might beset them. Inside the tower is the cloister of the chapel of the abbot, but it is chiefly a castle, and it is as a castle that it shows up against the sky line.

The neighbouring island of Ste. Marguerite, which is nearer the shore, has also its castle, built not in the sea, but upon a rock.

Every one knows the story of the man with the iron mask. It was in this castle that he was immured. Most people know also, that he wore no iron mask at all, but only a mask of velvet. It must have been in part by his own wish that he wore the mask, and it is generally supposed to be proved now that he was only a common spy. There have been more illustrious prisoners in this prison. Marshal Bazaine escaped thence in 1874.

We should like to know more of these islands. We should like to find more left to tell us of those old days, but they were deserted when Honorat came to visit them, and they were left more deserted when the Saracen pirates devastated them. It is not till the tenth century that we begin to know anything about the story of the monastery.

Here follows their story as admirably told by Mr. J. R. Green :

The sea took the place of the desert, but the type of monastic life which the solitaries had found in Egypt was faithfully preserved. The Abbot of Lérins was simply the chief of some thousands of religious devotees, scattered over the island in solitary cells, and linked together by the common ties of obedience and prayer. By a curious concurrence of events, the cœnobitic life of Lérins, so utterly unlike the later monasticism of the Benedictines, was long preserved in a remote corner of Christendom. Patrick, the most famous of its scholars, transmitted its type of monasticism to the Celtic Church which he founded in Ireland, and the vast numbers, the asceticism, the loose organisation of such abbeys as those of Bangor or Armagh, preserved to the twelfth century the essential characteristics of Lérins. Nor is this all its historical importance. What Iona is to the ecclesiastical history of Northern England, what Fulda and Monte Cassino are to the ecclesiastical history of Germany and Southern Italy, that this abbey of S. Honorat became to the Church of Southern Gaul. For nearly two centuries, and those centuries of momentous change, when the wreck of the Roman Empire threatened civilisation and Christianity with ruin like its own, the civilisation and Christianity of the great district between the Loire, the Alps, and the Pyrenees rested mainly on the abbey of Lérins. Sheltered by its insular position from the ravages of the barbaric invaders who poured down on the Rhône and the Garonne, it exercised over Provence and Aquitaine a supremacy such as Iona, till the Synod of Whitby, exercised over Northumbria. All the more

illustrious sees of Southern Gaul were filled by prelates who had been reared at Lérins: to Arles, for instance, it gave in succession Hilary, Cæsarius, and Virgilius. The voice of the Church was found in that of its doctors; the famous rule of Faith, "quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus," is the rule of Vincent of Lérins; its monk Salvian painted the agony of the dying Empire in his book on the government of God; the long fight of semi-Pelagianism against the sterner doctrines of Augustin was chiefly waged within its bounds. . . .

Little remains to illustrate the earlier and more famous period of the monastic history of Lérins, which extends to the massacre of its monks by Saracen pirates at the opening of the eighth century. A well in the centre of the island and a palm tree beside the church are linked to the traditional history of the founders of the abbey. Worked into the later buildings we find marbles and sculptures which may have been brought from the mainland, as at Torcello, by fugitives who had escaped the barbaric storm. A bas-relief of Christ and the apostles, which is now inserted over the west gate of the church, and a column of red marble which stands beside it, belong probably to the earliest days of the settlement of Lérins. In the little chapels scattered over the island fragments of early sarcophagi, inscriptions, and sculpture have been industriously collected and preserved. But the chapels themselves are far more interesting than their contents. Of the seven which originally lined the shore, two or three only now remain uninjured; in these the building itself is either square or octagonal, pierced with a single rough romanesque window, and of diminutive size. The walls and vaulting are alike of rough stonework. The chapels served till the Revolution as seven stations which were visited by the pilgrims to the island, but we can hardly doubt that in these, as in the seven chapels at Glendalough, we see relics of the earlier cœnobitic establishment.

The cloister of the abbey is certainly of a date later than the massacre of the monks, which took place, according to tradition, in the little square of wild greensward which lies within it; but the roughness of its masonry, the plain barrel roof, and the rude manner in which the low, gloomy vaulting is carried round its angles, are of the same character as in the usual tenth-century buildings of Southern Gaul. With the exception of the masonry of the side walls there is nothing in the existing remains of the abbey church itself earlier than its reconstruction at the close of the eleventh century. The building has been so utterly wrecked that little architectural detail is left; but the broad nave, with its narrow side aisles, the absence, as in the Aquitanian churches, of triforium and clerestory, and the shortness of the choir space, give their own individual mark to S. Honorat. Of the monastic buildings connected with the church only a few rooms remain, and these are destitute of any features of interest. They are at present used as an orphanage by the Franciscans, whom the Bishop of Fréjus, by whom the island was purchased, has settled there as an agricultural colony.

The appearance of the Moslem pirates at once robbed S. Honorat of its old security, and the cessation of their attacks was followed by a new danger from the Genoese and Calabrians who infested the coast in the fourteenth century. The isle was alternately occupied by French and Spaniards in the war between Francis and Charles V.; it passed under the rule of commendatory abbots, and in 1789, when it was finally

secularised, the four thousand monks of its earlier history had shrunk to four. Perhaps the most curious of all the buildings of Lérins is that which took its rise in the insecurity of its mediæval existence. The castle of Lérins, which lies on the shore to the S. of the church, is at once a castle and an abbey. Like many of the great monasteries of the East, its first object was to give security to its inmates against the marauders who surrounded them. Externally its appearance is purely military; the great tower rises from its trench deep cut in the rock, a portcullis protects the gate, the walls are pierced with loop-holes and crowned with battlements. But within, the arrangements, so far as it is possible to trace them in the present ruinous state of the building, seem to have been purely monastic. The interior of the tower is occupied by a double-arched cloister, with arcades of exquisite first-pointed work, through which one looks down into the little court below. The visitor passes from this into the ruins of the abbot's chapel, to which the relics were transferred for security from the church of S. Honorat, and which was surrounded by the cells, the refectory, and the domestic buildings of the monks. The erection of the castle is dated in the twelfth century, and from this time we may consider the older abbey buildings around the church to have been deserted and left to ruin; but we can hardly grumble at a transfer which has given us so curious a combination of military and monastic architecture in the castle itself.—J. R. GREEN, "Stray Studies."

At one time the abbot was considered a great and powerful baron.

There are charming early legends about the islands. There is the tale of the sister of Honorat, Marguerite. She is quite a fantastic person, but there is the pretty legend that Honorat promised to come and see her once every year, when the almond trees were in blossom, but by her prayers they blossomed many times in the year, and so, as soon as Honorat saw them he would cross over to visit his sister.

The Isle of Ste. Marguerite is pleasant enough in itself, but the regulation visit which one is obliged to pay to the supposed dwelling place of the Man with the Mask is rather depressing. One finds a thoroughly sordid prison well suited to so sordid a spy. Just as the Bridge of Sighs at Venice has seldom been traversed by any but secondary criminals, so this dingy prison seldom has been used for any but dingy prisoners. The guides still tell the old tales long ago exploded, and incline to make the Masked Man a son of Mazarin.

The little island of St. Honorat is more charming, but here I had a very bad five minutes on landing for the first time. My guide-book told me that there was only a little bar at the steamer wharf, and surely enough I found one, if one could use the word of a kind of counter of cement in the open. As I had depended on lunching on the island, and was extremely

hungry, I took anxious stock of the stores that were displayed there. There was some bread, some wine, a coffee pot, and something was evidently being cooked on the ground at the back of the counter. Naturally supposing that this was all I was going to get, I went round and looked, and found the usual bouillabaisse, smelling, as bouillabaisse always does, as if the fish was rather ancient. However, I made up my mind that if this was all I was to have I must make the best of it. When the meal was cooked, the man in charge made no offer to give me any at all, and my heart sank lower. At last I told him of my distress, and was pointed to a little restaurant under the great Aleppo pines, a little further along the shore. Various people were already busy with lunch. The little family next to me was, as I suppose, a schoolmaster giving his wife and children a good time in his brief Christmas holiday; his hat was on at a rakish angle, though he was strictly temperate, and he did everything with an air that seemed to suggest he was really having a fling. In fact he squeezed a lemon over the fish of a little tiny girl with such gusto that it all went into her eyes, and the island resounded with lamentations. He tried to make good with the soda-water syphon.

The Cistercians on the island keep everything in order, and also grow a very admirable white wine which does not leave the island. The old cloisters which still remain in the modern monastery are most beautiful.

The Isles of Lérins have later legends, not the least charming of which is that of Azalais of Toulon. For seven years she had made pilgrimage on the isle of St. Honorat. In the seventh year came war and pestilence; even the great lady was reduced to poverty. She came to Marseille a beggar, but carrying always with her the precious palm which had been given to her on her seventh pilgrimage. Imagining that every one would value the palm as much as she did, she went to a rich merchant and asked for its value in gold. He refused to give her gold, but jestingly said he would give her as many copper coins as would balance it in his scales. He placed the fragile palm in the one scale, but to his amazement it outweighed fifty coins, and even ten pounds in gold which he threw in to make the weight. At this the merchant could only see that the hand of St. Honorat was in the business. He asked pardon for his contemptuous words, and gave the poor woman enough to keep her for the rest of her natural life, while he himself became a devoted pilgrim on the island.

A not very different story is told of Clariane de Fréjus, who used to give bread and wine to pilgrims at the fountain of Estérel. When she became too poor to give her accustomed dole, a mysterious monk bade her none the less to go to her cupboard, where we need hardly say she found good store both of corn and wine. With this she was able, not only to pay her debts, but to continue her charity to the pilgrims of St. Honorat.

It is from Antibes or Cagnes that we can conveniently reach Grasse. All good Americans, before they die, go to Grasse, as the town of flowers and scents,[1] but one should visit it for its own sake too. Fantastic streets, fine old towers, an old-world place, along with great activity. There are still to be seen something of its old ramparts of the fourteenth century, and something yet to remind us that it was once a republic of its own. Its history is a strange one. Powerful once, it provoked enemies, and finally received its severest blows from its own countrymen. Seen at the right time of the year, Grasse, and all about it, is one great carpet of flowers. Everything that flowers or fruit can give us must have been through Grasse first. It is roses, roses, everywhere, and from the hills around the peasants bring in the sweet-smelling herbs. For a time Grasse is snowed under with petals. There is a fine cathedral of the twelfth century, with rich treasures and fine paintings. There is the museum Fragonard with its great pictures that were meant for Madame Du Barry.

Grasse can boast a Provençal poet, who, like other great poets, produced some of his best work in prison.

Every one knows that Grasse is the centre of perfume. In the old days it used to be Gueuse, but now it is Grasse, in the land just standing back from the sea on the Azure Coast. Of course one naturally does not like the idea of beautiful flowers being gathered by the ton and crushed into essences and oils. One enjoys them and their scent as one walks by the mountain slopes, for the deep valleys are filled with perfume and colour, and one would like to leave the perfume and the colour just where nature has set them. But, after all, flowers have their value also, and it is something that we can carry about with us —or use in the soap of our bathrooms—the delicate perfumes that the sun of Provence has brought to full power and delicacy. But Provence does not always crush her flowers. She sends us tons of lovely pinks, carnations, roses, narcissi, anemones,

[1] And soap. See Treves' sarcasms on the subject, bitter, but merited.

mimosas and violets. We can buy them on the dingiest days in the dingiest streets in London, but those are only the flowers that Grasse does not want. Cassias, violets, orange flowers and roses come in their cartfuls to the dull factories, where they are tortured and squeezed into a shapeless and ugly mass, but they have left behind them their sweet scented souls.

Many of these flowers and herbs are specially cultivated all round Grasse. It is just at the right height for cultivation. One finds acres and acres of beautiful flowers, but there are, of course, many other centres, the flowers from which pour into Grasse at the right time of the year. There are the oranges, the May roses, and other roses that follow in their course during the year, the jasmine, with its delicate white and its faint sweet scent, giving an annual harvest of six hundred thousand kilograms—for we are bound to come to statistics at last. The mimosas do not amount to so large a quantity, but the mint goes into the millions, and the tuberose to hundreds of thousands of kilograms. Those who have seen the violets growing along the Riviera coast have noted that the violet of perfume is the beautiful Parma variety. They have to be carefully sheltered from winds to grow in great luxuriance. Then there are the pinks or carnations that one gets at Antibes. They are not strictly a flower for the perfume refiners, but a good many of them find their way there all the same.

The flower picking begins in February with the mimosa and goes on through a charming catalogue of flowers till we reach the rosemary in June, the mint in July, the lavender in August, the geranium in September and the tuberose up to October. These wild herbs are brought down in their abundance from the mountain side by the peasants. Grasse is not only the centre of flowers, but it is responsible for a very large proportion of the perfumed herbs throughout the Maritimes Alps. It is therefore doubly the city of perfume, and it could hardly have found for itself an industry that more fits a little Provençal rock town.

Perfumes and scents are so common with us nowadays that we hardly stop to inquire when they began. It was the early glove makers who seem to have begun the fashion of using perfumes as we use them nowadays. The soap makers learned the art of pressing the flowers into olive oil before they made their flower-scented soap. It was Catherine de Médicis who is thought to have founded the first laboratory at Grasse, and at first Grasse was able to grow enough flowers for its own

little factories. Cannes began its work at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but Grasse has always remained the chief centre of it all. That is why this little town is a busy hive of workers, and why the roads to Grasse are covered these days with heavy motor traffic.

A good deal of the extraction is done by distilling. There is also crushing in a warm room, and besides, there is a method of spreading the flower petals upon a fat or grease and imprisoning the perfume in such a way that it passes into the fat. This is what makes our pomades and many of the oils. But there are also a great many more mechanical operations which all aim at extracting the last whiff of scent even from the most coy flower.

Besides what Provence produces, there are many flowers and herbs that come from afar. Spices, scented woods, perfumed roots are also used in the factories of Grasse. There are a great many by-products and nothing need be wasted and thrown away. For the wild herbs many places have their special growth. Some herbs like the rosemary are found everywhere on the hills not far from the sea, and the spike-lavender likes to grow in rather stony places and on the sides of the streams. A special lavender grows on the granite of the islands of Hyères and parts of the Estérel. The true lavender is found higher up. Every October there is a fair at Apt and also at Digne, of lavender water. Round about San Remo is grown the marjoram which is found elsewhere, as in Vaucluse, and Corsica is rich in geraniums and in roses.

Grasse is one of the best centres for the mountains in the north, though one can equally well go from Nice, according to the river valley which one wishes to follow. The simplest and perhaps the best known of the shorter excursions is to the Gorges du Loup. There are four valleys running, from west to east roughly, one above the other. The first is the Siagne, which is picturesque enough, but naturally as we get further inland the scenery becomes finer. The next will be the Loup, and the next above that is the Estéron, while still further north is the Var, which turns northward at Entrevaux. If we take the first of these excursions we would come within a short time of leaving Grasse to St. Vallier, following the road which leads to Castellane. Not far from here is one of the well-known natural arches in the rock which one finds in this district. The hills all around are crowned with ruins. We should next make our way—by whatever route we choose, either continuing the

high road, or going direct from St. Vallier—to Thorenc, a well-known centre for summer residents, where is also good winter sport. Then to come into the gorges of the river one must make for Gréolières. Just after passing the road which leads to Coursegoule we should enter the narrow valley or dale of the Loup, which reminds one of Dovedale. There are, of course, waterfalls and smaller cascades. So we work our way back to Cannes or Grasse.

If we want to take the valley of the Estéron we should make first for Gattières and Carros. Thence the path will take us to Bouyon, and not much further on we shall find ourselves in the broad valley of the Estéron, a valley of magnificent trees.

Going west we reach Roquestéron, which is on the stream. It was once an old republic. We can go also and see the fine frescoes at Notre Dame d'Entrevignes. This is one of the little places which suffered by earthquake and was abandoned. The frescoes are still there, though the church is now a hay barn. We can find our way thence to Sigale—a little mountain village whose church was founded by the Templars—and then make our way to Gars, another cliff village, and so to Brianconette. Thence to St. Auban and back to Nice by whatever route we choose. The simplest route will take us past Col de La Faye and thence to Aiglun, which is probably where Mistral placed his fantastic castle of Estrelle. Thence by Gilette we can find the road that leads direct to Nice.

A longer excursion is by the valley of the Var from Nice. The first place of importance will be Villars where there are good paintings in the church, and leaving the valley of the Cians we shall go westerly to Puget-Théniers. We can if we wish, instead of going direct, go up to Beuil, perched on the side of its mountain, or we can follow up northward till we meet the Var again at Guillaumes and cross to Beuil, and so home. But if we go straight on the main road we shall come to Entrevaux If we want to see more river gorges we can easily extend our walk to the gorges of Daluis, a deep and gloomy ravine with dark purple rocks.

If we make up from Nice towards the Turin direction we shall pass through Drap and Contes, not far from which is Châteauneuf, another deserted village. Working downwards from Cannes we come to the interesting villages of Peille and Peillon. Peille is far removed from the world and keeps its old simplicity. It is the usual little hill town with its little stony streets, interesting Latin inscriptions, and

rather strange little peculiarities of architecture. It stands wild and solitary among desolate hills. On the way is a very fine view of the coast as far west as the islands of Hyères. There is a church cut into a rock which forms its pavement, and there is an old palace of the Lascaris. Each year on the first of January there is a curious little ceremony at Peille. The master of the festival and the *curé* of the village give to the young men an orange into which is set some small flower. The young men then give to their sweethearts what is called "the flowering apple," and that is a kind of public betrothal. There is, of course, merry making and a Farandole. An opposite ceremony takes place on the eighth of September when the girls give the young men a ribbon.

Close to Peille is Peillon, perhaps an hour's walk. Peillon is the usual picturesque town perched [1] on the rocks, and one can have an extremely wonderful view beyond the village looking down to Peillon from the top of its mountain, to the little river below.

As we follow along the coast we first come to the cape of Antibes. People have said that Antibes is the most Greek of all the places on the French Riviera. The name is certainly Greek, for it means the "outpost" against the attacks of the pirates, who were just as lively in their days as in the days of the Saracens. The story of Antibes is a long story of naval battles. There is nothing left of the Greek city save an inscribed stone which was dedicated to Aphrodite. Of course, when the Romans came they built there their usual arena, theatre, baths, and so on. These have long ago been pulled down for the other buildings which make the long line of embankment against the sea. At one time it was well-known in the outer world, and no doubt it deserved to be.

It does not matter which way one walks from Antibes. There are glorious views everywhere. Looking inland one gets the background of the Alps.

There are fine churches, the best being the fisherman's church of our Lady of the Good Harbour. Each year the statue is carried in procession, and the old prayers are still uttered that the town may be protected from the attacks of the Saracens.

It is difficult to think of anything much more charming than Antibes as seen from the end of its pier. The little old town

[1] One must use the word, despite the sarcasms of the late Sir Frederick Treves. These places can equally (or better) be reached from Menton (see below, chap. xiv).

is perched there on its promontory, full of quaint old streets and odd unexpected turnings, and looking over across its bay to the fort on the other side. Most people go and see on the Town Hall wall the well-known inscription to the boy Septentrion, twelve years old, who appeared at the theatre there for two days, and " brought the house down " [1] with his dancing. But there are no remains of the theatre. Most charming of all is the view one gets of the setting sun, and the snow-capped Alps behind Nice. Then as they begin to fade away, and the last pink flush vanishes, one sees the little lights of Nice beginning to come out like a thousand stars.

Here is Paul Arène's picture :—

Our Antibes is charming ! a harbour, a mole, a lighthouse, everything as at Bigorneau, but a little larger ; pleasant ramparts just high enough to give a lovely view to the people who take there their daily constitutional.

The little Lighthouse is so small that it hardly lights anything but itself ; the little mole only embraces just so much sea as so little a town could feel inclined for ; the little harbour only receives a few tartanes, now and then a coasting brig called always by the Provençaux a " brigoulette."

At Antibes there is the Great Square, with an old Saracen Tower, which being bored with its isolation behind the houses looks over their roofs all the day long to see what is the latest going on in the " Café of the Marine."

And what silence ! A silence hardly broken in the streets by the soughing which the breeze elicits from the delicate palms of some date tree bending over the wall of a garden, or by the tinkle of the water of the washing-sheds, which comes out bright and clear and then goes running in streams in the middle of the streets and reddening itself before the preserve factory with the juice of pressed tomatoes.

By the Harbour-Gate, on the " meadow of the Prud'homie " smokes a cauldron full of tan to embrown the boats' sails. Nets dry, stretched out. The tartanes [2] are " like painted ships on a painted ocean," over their reflections. A boat comes in ; all awakes ; hulls dance, masts bob and curtsey, and their lengthened reflection goes curling and twisting in the clear water with a red flame at the end.

Yet all this in silence—not a rope creaking, not a plank grating, as if Antibes, town and harbour and all, feared to wake the hairy crab, or the cuttlefish which yonder old fisherman, wading bare-legs, reed in hand, is watching.

And what pretty names ! the Ilette, the Gravette, diminutives which suit a little town which does not blush to be little ; and every-

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[1] *Placuit.* I leave the reader to do his own moralizing over this pathetic little inscription on the spot. But various writers have done it for him, should he prefer it ready made.

[2] A sailing boat with a small lateen sail. A Genoese rig.

where something lovable and tender, made more tender by the contrast of deep sky, great sea, immeasurable Alps, and of Nice, of which one has a glimpse over there, between Alps and sea, a long line of white houses, in a mist of silver.

Antibes is no doubt an idyllic place, and has perhaps a greater charm than any of its better known sisters.

Further on we reach Biot. We go by the road which leads to Grasse. It is a charming little village perched on a small hill, with its little valley below it. In olden days it was a strong place of the Templars. Now it merely has a little population of tillers of the ground and workers in pottery. It is, no doubt, somewhere close by where the great battle between the troops of Otho and Vitellius took place.

Cagnes lies in a little circle of hills in the valley of its own river. On the top is the great castle of the Grimaldi, and it is said to stand upon the base of an old temple of Venus. The streets rise straight up from the valley, extremely steep, and there is the odd assemblage of old ruins and walls that one gets in all the hill villages of South Europe, which makes a great relief from the long rows of modern houses in Cannes and Nice.

Not far from Cagnes inland, on the river Loup, is the little village of Villeneuve, where is the castle of the celebrated Romeo, Governor of Provence. Every one knows the legend that, in his old age, finding nothing but ingratitude for all the wonderful things he had done, he went off as he had come, a poor pilgrim. In point of fact, he died whilst still enjoying his high office.

At Nice, as at Grasse, one is in the very heart of the flower country. The Public Gardens are set out with all sorts of lovely things, and it is interesting in the winter to see the gardeners in the morning taking the blankets off the flower beds. Much time can be whiled away at Nice on the promenade, or in the old town. But the town itself, like Cannes, and perhaps rather more so, is getting too noisy to be of any use to those who come to the Riviera to rest. Nice certainly has the great advantage from this point of view, that it is an admirable centre—no doubt the best centre—of the Riviera, and you can get to anywhere without any difficulty at all. It is really simplest and best to go down into the Place Masséna and just find what is going, and when. There are any number, of course, of trams, and any number, also, of motor chars-à-bancs, either the ordinary diligences, or those which make special tours for

the visitor. One really need not trouble to give a list of these, for lists will be thrust into the hands of anybody who looks as if he wants to go anywhere. But apart from the ordinary coast routes, one can go to La Turbie, up by the Great Corniche and returning by Laghet. By the Middle Corniche one can visit Eze. Inland there is Vence, the Vésubie Valley, the gorge of the Cians and of Daluis, or one can go even further into the upper valley of the Estéron. These excursions are really quite inexpensive, and they are made extremely easy. Vence is a particularly charming little place, and it can be reached direct from Nice, or by the tram of the Sud de France from Cagnes.[1]

THE CARNIVAL OF NICE

Everyone associates Nice with Carnival, and Carnival, as perhaps not every one knows, means "farewell to meat" during Lent. Of course it has lost its ancient significance, and one must feel quite sure that a very large number of those who join most heartily in the Carnival of Nice, or elsewhere, certainly do not in any way dock themselves of their customary cutlet or chateaubriand. Moreover, the Nice Carnival has necessarily become an affair largely of the tourist. One may say, therefore, that it has its interest, but this is hardly an historical interest, and should not really attract the serious student of Provence.

Carnival at Nice begins with a great procession, and every one turns out to meet King Carnival with all sorts of illuminations, noise of trumpets, dancing and singing. It would seem as if the entire population had taken leave of its senses. The procession will come to an end about half-past ten, but the dancing and jollifications are prolonged for some hours afterwards. In these modern days with all sorts of facilities of lights, and other properties unknown to those of ancient days, the procession can be carried out with a very considerable amount of magnificence. There are, of course, many bands, both in the procession itself and in the Place Masséna. This progress or procession goes on two or three different times, and there is a final parade on Shrove Tuesday, when King Carnival, amid the glory of fireworks, is duly burned in effigy. Of course Carnival time is made additionally merry by dances and battles of flowers. Against these battles of flowers Sir Frederick Treves

[1] The "Hinterland" of Nice is the subject of part of the next chapter.

most rightly utters a very urgent protest. He has the same horror that any of us Northerners should rightly feel at seeing the glorious blossoms of the South degraded and crushed in what seems a foolish and insensate manner. Still, battles of flowers are *de rigueur*, not only for Nice, but also for the harbour of Villefranche and elsewhere. There is in the harbour a battle of flowers at sea. No doubt the scene is very effective. Every kind of boat is afloat. There are thousands of spectators, so that it is very difficult to get a seat anywhere near the water. Flowers are dropped in these bays from the air by aeroplanes. Traffic along the lower Corniche road is as good as stopped; warships in the harbour light up with astonishingly-planned illuminations, and, as elsewhere, every kind of festivity clusters round this local keeping of Carnival.

Menton, also, has its battle of flowers, its processions of decorated cars, and its floral gondolas. Those who will may go and see these festivities. For ourselves we much prefer a quieter introduction to a Mediterranean Lent. One should find one's Carnival in one of the smaller places and see the old-world ceremonies that have gone on undisturbed by tourists for hundreds of years. Here is a charming description by our English historian, J. R. Green,[1] of the "Carnival feeling" in a small Riviera town.

> But Carnival sweeps all this feeling away with the coming of the spring. From the opening of February week follows week in a monotony of warm sunshine. Day after day there is the same cloudless cope of blue overhead, the same marvellous colour in the sea, the same blaze of roses in the gardens, the same scent of violets in every lazy breath of air that wanders down from the hills. Every almond-tree is a mass of white bloom. The narcissus has found a rival along the terraces in the anemone, and already the wild tulip is preparing to dispute the palms of supremacy with both. It is the time for picnics, for excursions, for donkey-rides, for dreams beneath the clump of cypresses that shoot up black into the sky, for siestas beneath the olives. It is wonderful what a prodigious rush of peace and good temper follows on the first rush of spring. The very doctors of the winter resort shake hands with one another, the sermons of the chaplain lose their frost-bitten savour and die down into something like charity; scandal and tittle-tattle go to sleep in the sunshine. The stolid, impassive English nature blooms into a life strangely unlike its own. Papas forget their *Times*. Mammas forget their propriety. The stout British merchant finds himself astride of a donkey, and exchanging good-humoured badinage with the labourers in the olive-terraces. The Dorcas of Exeter Hall leaves her tracts at home, and passes without a groan the pictured Madonna on every wall. Carnival comes, and com-

[1] J. R. Green is buried in the cemetery at Menton.

pletes the wreck of the proprieties. The girls secure their window and pelt their black-bearded Professor in the street below without dread of a scolding on the "convenances." The impassive spinster whose voice never rises at home above the most polite whisper screams with delight at the first sugarplum that hits her, and furtively supplies her nieces with ammunition to carry on the war. "It is such fun, isn't it, papa?" shout the boys as they lean breathless over the balcony, laughing and pelting at the crowd that laughs and pelts back again. And papa, who "puts down" fairs in England, and wonders what amusement people can find in peep-shows and merry-go-rounds, finds himself surprised into a "Very jolly indeed!"

J. R. GREEN, "Stray Studies."

Close above Nice we find Cimiez, a Roman town upon the great Aurelin road. It is noted, of course, for its amphitheatre, of which little enough remains, but still we can reconstruct the building from the remains of the rows which are supported on arches as at Fréjus and elsewhere. It is certainly small as amphitheatres go, and clearly was of elliptical form. Near the foot of the hill of Cimiez is St. Pons, which is really almost a suburb of Nice. Its buildings are modern, but there is a famous old abbey, and there is little doubt that it was built upon the foundation of Roman buildings.

We pass now to the principality of Monaco, the name of which at once calls up all sorts of romantic suggestions to the mind of the reader. For sheer beauty the rock of Monaco is perhaps the finest thing along the whole of the Riviera coast. There are just the three towns and Condamine, which is almost part of Monaco and Monte Carlo. For some time it belonged to the Grimaldi, who held for many centuries the title. It was Napoleon III who took away from the reigning prince all except his capital.

Those who wish can visit the gaming rooms at the Casino. Others will find plenty of interest in the little principality itself. It is perfectly complete—its rocks and terraces are all that one could want—its little harbour—its trees—its shrubs—its little territory where no one need labour, for indeed there is little enough to do. It is not land that can be cultivated. It wins, therefore, its prosperity in other ways. Its new cathedral, St. Nicholas, seems to stand up rather sharply from the little peninsula. It is in the Byzantine style. There is besides, at the hill foot, the little chapel of St. Dévote, a saint held in much regard by the people of Monaco.

The remark has frequently been made that Monaco is really like a Gilbert and Sullivan opera town, and there is no doubt something in it, but the great rock has its solid charms. The

sea somehow seems either more majestic or more enticing at the end of the peninsula. No one can exhaust the place in a comparatively short time ; one somehow finds one's self there again and again. Every one of course goes and sees the splendid museum of everything that has to do with the deep sea. It is certainly most fascinating, and I happened to be there on an afternoon that an octopus in the aquarium was in its very best frame of mind, and was going through all its tricks with the greatest gusto in the world. They have an admirable arrangement by which you may feed the fishes at the price of twenty-five cents. This both gives joy to the visitor and relieves the management of some of the cost of upkeep. It seems a principle that might well be extended in other directions. One of the most interesting exhibits in the museum is that which shows how you may fish with a seine net under the ice. This would seem to the mere outsider to be the most utterly impossible thing in the world, but the wily Lapland Eskimo finds it extremely easy. He makes a hole in the ice, drops his net, which has floats and weights of the ordinary kind, and then by means of planks attached to the end of the net, which by cutting more holes he can push along in the desired direction, he is able to extend his entire net, which he ultimately draws up in the ordinary way through a large hole at the opposite end.

Every one will go up from Nice or thereabouts, possibly from Monte Carlo, to La Turbie, where one may see the somewhat vulgar monument to Augustus, and the much better view down upon Monaco below. Monte Carlo, a little to the left, looks rather modern and blatant, but Monaco somehow seems softer, more old-world, and the view from the top is one of the most charming things of the Riviera.

Every one knows all there is to know about Monte Carlo, and if they do not know the inside of a casino, at least they know the charming terraces and gardens that are outside. There is perhaps an air of too much artificiality about it all, but no one can deny the beauty of the place and the charm of its sea, which people tell you there is bluer than elsewhere in the Mediterranean. It was here that the strange old lady, of whom I have spoken earlier, remarked to me in the railway carriage, " Je n'aime pas la mer."

Monte Carlo, it may be remarked, is, on the strength of a successful season (1924–1925) going in for all sorts of improvements. There is to be a new theatre, a new building for the

MONACO AND MONTE CARLO

International Sporting Club, a new Hotel de Luxe in place of the present Palais des Beaux Arts : to say nothing of increasing the Larvotto bathing establishment, and laying down many new tennis-courts !

HISTORY OF MONACO

While Monaco and Monte Carlo are often thought to suggest comedy, the fact remains that Monaco at least has been the scene of very dreadful tragedies, sordid enough at the time, but in the light of history some sort of glamour centres about them. The best that can be made of this glamour may be found in Sir Frederick Treves' account of the capture of Monaco and of the murder of Lucien. It was on Christmas Eve in 1306 that the Guelphs, represented by the Grimaldi family, determined to capture Monaco which was held by the Ghibellines under the Spinola. At the head of the party which left Nice, travelling across the hills, was a monk. They parted at the foot of the cliff, and the armed men disappeared from sight. When the monk heard the bell for the midnight mass, he started to climb the steep path leading to the gate. He was fingering not a rosary but a dagger, but none the less, clothed as he was in the habit of a prior of St. Dévote, he passed unnoticed ; even the sentinel did not hold him up. He did not, however, enter the church as the sentinel may have expected him to do, but blew a whistle over the ramparts, and drew up in some way the followers he had left behind. Massacre followed. The monk was Francis Grimaldi himself, and from this time with only a short interval, Monaco has been in Grimaldi possession.

The Lucien murder is a more gruesome story. Lucien had a nephew—Bartolomeo—whom Lucien himself conveyed to Monaco when on his way to Lyons. The uncle treated the nephew with the greatest possible kindness. The only suspicious event during the visit was that the nephew would not accompany the uncle to mass, and that he was observed to be extremely pale and somewhat agitated during the evening meal. Seeing some galleys approaching the harbour, Bartolomeo recognized them as the convoy of his cousin Doria, and begged the prince to send a messenger with an escort to meet them. By this means all the available guards were sent off duty. The murder was then completed, but though the murderer's friends seized the palace, they could not hold out against the

maddened townspeople, and only just escaped on to the galleys that were just approaching the beach.

But apart from these tragedies, Monaco's history has been rather uninspiring. Here is J. R. Green's " Stray Study " on the subject :

Even the least among Italian cities yields so much of interest in its past that we turn with disappointment from the history of Monaco. The place has always been a mere pirate haunt, without a break of liberty or civic life ; and yet there is a certain fascination in the perfect uniformity of its existence. The town from which Cæsar sailed to Genoa and Rome vanished before the ravages of the Saracens, and the spot remained desert till it passed by Imperial cession to Genoa, and the Genoese Commune erected a fort which became a refuge alternately for its Guelf or Ghibelline exiles, its Spinolas or its Grimaldis. A church of fine twelfth-century work is the only monument which remains of this earlier time ; at the opening of the fourteenth century Monaco passed finally to the Grimaldis, and became in their hands a haunt of buccaneers. Only one of their line rises into historic fame, and he is singularly connected with a great event in English history. Charles Grimaldi was one of the foremost leaders in the Italian wars of his day ; he passed as a mercenary into the service of France in her combat with Edward III, and his seventy-two galleys set sail from Monaco with the fifteen thousand Genoese bowmen who appear so unexpectedly in the forefront of the battle of Créçy. The massacre of these forces drove him home again to engage in attacks on the Catalans and Venetians and struggles with Genoa, till the wealth which his piracy had accumulated enabled him to add Mentone and Roccabruna to his petty dominions. It is needless to trace the history of his house any further ; corsairs, soldiers of fortune, trimming adroitly in the struggles of the sixteenth century between France and Spain, sinking finally into mere vassals of Louis XIV. and hangers-on at the French Court, the family history of the Grimaldis is one of treason and blood—brother murdering brother,[1] nephew murdering uncle.

[1] The murdered Lucien had murdered his brother, Jean II.

CHAPTER XIV

MENTON

MENTON is the last of the great towns of the French Riviera. As every one knows, it has an east and a west bay, and a constant struggle goes on as to which is the better.[1] In fact, in Menton east is east, and west is west, and the twain never meet except to start afresh the eternal dispute. Indeed, the fact is that Menton is bracing to those who want bracing, and warm and sheltered to those who are inclined to be warm and sheltered. It is thought to be a great deal humbler than its sister towns, and no doubt in some senses it is. There are more of the English Misses and fewer perhaps of the really gay people of the Riviera. In other words, it is a quiet pleasing spot for those who want the sunshine but not the excitements of Monte Carlo.

The old town lies in the centre, and forms a convenient meeting ground for the disputants of east and west. It was always in early days rather a poor little place, and like so many others along this coast, its history has been one of perpetual struggle between one neighbouring town and another.

It is also Italian, at any rate in character, and the old town is just like the rugged old Italian town built up of steep paths and curious arches. Its best street was the Rue Longue, once a famous street dwelt in by the principal people of the town. There is an old gateway still, but it is modernized. Up from the gate one reaches the old cemetery, which is prettily situated among its trees. There are pieces of walls in the cemetery that seem to have belonged to some old fortress. There is still, also, a little bit to be seen of the fort on the seaside that played its part well enough in the old days.

Menton is without doubt the most sheltered of all the Riviera places, and contrives even to ripen the banana. It is no longer

[1] My own emphatic vote is for the east, as better sheltered, better curved, and with finer outlook.

especially an invalid place, but a smaller Nice. It is perhaps the best of all the Riviera centres for those who like to walk. The inland valleys are very delightful. The old towns on the hill-tops are especially fascinating. There are prehistoric caves and the Roches Rouges. Italy is next door, and it is extremely easy to get along by motor, and so Menton is not likely to lose its popularity for a very long time to come.

From Menton one can follow up the river valleys and visit Sospel, Ste. Agnès, Gorbio, and others slightly above on the Italian border. We will take these in their reverse order. Their charm is that they are half-French, half-Italian.

Sospel, with its patch of dark roofs, is in a dingy valley. It has fallen from its high estate in the old Roman days when it was an important centre. It once had its Bishop ; it had lofty walls, gates and towers. It even had something which we could call a university, really a group of small colleges. It is chiefly noted for its very ancient, beautiful bridge, which dates from the thirteenth century, with a little house on the middle. None the less, even in these fallen days it has a kind of air of a capital city. You cannot help noticing here and there a beautiful tower, an attractive archway, arcades, and many chapels, and in the chapels fine old paintings.[1]

We can work up from Sospel through the valley of the Roya, and visit Brigue and Tende. Not far from Brigue is the Madonna de la Fontaine, where we can see some fine frescoes. It is worth going there to see what realism did, or could do, in older days. Tende belongs partly to Provence and partly to Italy. It, too, has its old remains and ancient palace, an ancient castle and an ancient church, where are buried the Lascaris, who played so wonderful a part in the history of eastern Provence.

Coming nearer to the coast, is Ste. Agnès. Here is indeed a rock village. It is right up on the top of a precipice, and like so many of the little rock villages, seems merely to be clinging there as best it can. You can only get there on foot or with a mule, and when you get there you find it, just as are so many of the rock villages, all a muddle and tumble of rough little streets seeming to lead nowhere at all. One hardly knows why

[1] Perhaps a Bréa (Immaculate Conception) in the Sacristy of St. Michel.

it ever was placed there, and a legend has had to be invented to account for its very existence.

Nearer to the coast is Gorbio. Gorbio is perhaps wilder and more rugged than any of these little Riviera towns. It seems to have been thrown together in bits, and indeed that is probably the actual history of many of these little places. There was always little enough room on the tops of their rock plateaux, and when you wanted to build, you must build where you could, even if you had to run your new street over the old ones.

Though these villages and towns are all built rather alike, one does not really get tired of wandering about their narrow streets and their odd houses that cluster together as if for support. On the way to Gorbio we have nothing but charming and beautiful views of the valley itself. Though once it must have been the scene of constant bloodshed, it is now as smiling as anyone could wish. Gorbio is charming to explore, or beautiful to look upon from some neighbouring height. The buildings are seen all grouped round the monastery, great cypress trees standing up against the background of rocky hills; or there is a lovely view of Gorbio and the stretch of valleys and sea from just above the village itself. The whole coast is full of these lovely old mediæval strongholds.

Gorbio, too, has its history. It passed from master to master, and at each change the deeds of transfer were sealed in blood. For a time it belonged to Beatrix of Provence, and it belonged in turn to all the big families of the eastern Riviera.

What we have said of this little town is true almost of all the little towns in the back of the Riviera. Their history has been written again and again. However dull they may seem to us to-day, there is not one that has not its history, its antiquities, its legends filled with picturesque incidents, and often, indeed, with stories of bloodshed. Some of these stories have been charmingly told by Sir Frederick Treves in his book "The Riviera of the Corniche Road." There is, for instance, behind Menton the sad little relic of Castillon. It stands, like so many of these seaside towns, on a little pinnacle. It is, as the name seems to show, a Roman town, and was dwelt in not for hundreds, but for thousands of years, but almost in our own day it was shaken by an earthquake and deserted. One can go up there now by the usual steep road, or mule path, zig-

zagging till you reach an imposing flight of steps which takes you through a gateway into what was once a town. The church stands; there are only the ruins of the castle; there are crumbling walls and shattered houses. Upon it all the summer beats down the burning sun; upon it all the winter beats the wind chilled with frosts. Anyone who wants to be sentimental and moralize over the frailty of all things that seem strong upon this earth may well go and meditate among the few old people that you still find at Castillon.

Then there is Castellar, with a few dirty little streets and dim chapels that once belonged to different orders or fraternities. Or you can go back towards Monte Carlo. You can go up to the little town of Roquebrune, of which one gets so charming a view from the coast line to the west. It is entered by the usual narrow path and narrow steps. It also, like Gorbio, has been rather accumulated than actually built in any sort of plan. You never know where a street is going to bring you to, and you can play, as it were, hide and seek with yourself for a very long time. By the church is a charming garden that all visitors know well. Up on the heights is the old castle of the Lascaris, with plenty to see inside, and enough left to enable one to reconstruct again something of the life that was lived there in the old days.

Roquebrune loves gardens where there is room for them, and one can catch a glimpse of the oranges over the old walls.

While Eze is full of melancholy, Roquebrune is bright. The story of its slipping down in a landslide is no doubt due to the fact that its buildings and its background seem entirely blended in one. The castle, as is no doubt well known, was the property of an Englishman, and he gave it to the town as a War Memorial.

If one goes further west before making an inroad into the country one can, from Nice or from Cannes, go by the valleys of the Vésubie, the Tinée, and the long valley of the Var. Here, again, one will meet a rock village perhaps more picturesque even than Castillon—Châteauneuf. It is completely deserted, and its large walls stand conspicuous on its rough hill.

If we follow the Vésubie, we would be wise to go up to St. Martin, lying snug away in this little amphitheatre of hills. St. Martin is now becoming the chief fresh-air place for the

summer in the mountains of Nice. There are hotels, and altogether it is a smart little place, but no number of hotels and no number of golf courses can take away the primitive beauty of its surroundings. There are valleys, passes, woods and meadows. One can find one's way to the waterfall at Ciriegia, the lakes of Agnel, and can climb the summits of Mercantour, or go by the Valley of the Madonna of the Windows, once a famous place and much visited by pilgrims. The famous statue of the Madonna goes each year to St. Martin in the valley to pass the winter.

From St. Martin one can reach the valley of the Tinée and cross it by St. Sauveur to Roubion, another charming little village at the foot of its crags, or one can go up the Tinée, not forgetting to see the Chapel of St. Eriege, a little country chapel of the thirteenth century.

St. Étienne is the capital of all the upper Tinée, and has a fine Romanesque tower and some good frescoes, and it, also, is a wonderful centre for excursions. One can pursue the Tinée right to its source. One can find one's way into the Valley of the Barcelonnette, or one can visit St. Dalmas la Sauvage and go up to the Pass of Moutière, which will also lead ultimately to Barcelonnette. There are also the Lakes of Vens, Tenibras and Rabouns, or one can make one's way down to Guillaumes on the Var, a prim little village lying between its cliffs and its river. Thence we can follow up or down the Var to Entrevaux, for instance, which one enters by a bridge with two flanking towers, and whence one looks up to its almost inaccessible castle. Entrevaux has a little cathedral. It possesses, also, a famous heroine Jeanne, who drove to flight the troops of Charles V. Then there is the gruesome story of the barber of Entrevaux, who cut the throat of the Imperial Governor, and so brought liberty again to his beloved town.

From Entrevaux one can, if one wishes, work west down to Castellane, which has had, like so many of these towns, a stormy history. One need only look at its walls to find how Roman, Frank and Visigoth have all played their parts. In the fourth century it was burnt by the Saracens, but rebuilt later by some mysterious Valentinus and handed over to the princes of Castille, by whom the Saracens were at last chased from Provence. Above the town stands its great rock. It still has its walls and its single arch bridge. Like so many of the little places in Provence, it also has its heroine—Judith

Audron—whose courage inspired the citizens and drove away even the terrible Lesdiguières, of whom Queen Elizabeth said that were there two Lesdiguières in France, she would beg for one.

Then if one wishes, one can go north again to Digne, again a Roman town which lies in a little corner on the bend of the river, which has its cathedral with a tower and fine open ironwork on its top, and a fine rose window, and a simple but dignified interior. It has also its baths and sulphur springs, of which Pliny has spoken, and though it is so much wrapped in the past it is a busy modern town with all sorts of little industries, especially for work in ornamental stones.[1]

Thence one can reach Sisteron, or if one wishes, one can go from Castellane to Riez on the old Roman road, which still possesses its fine columns—all that is left of an old colonnade. As we enter what was the ancient market-place we see a strange square monument containing eight columns that were not there originally, but the columns are certainly Roman. The building seems to have been an old baptistery. There is also, on the top of the hill, a square tower with six small Roman columns, and on all sides one can see the remains of Roman occupation.

One can pass from Riez to Manosque through the little Italian-looking town of Valensole. Manosque itself has a fine church of St. Sauveur, with open ironwork on its campanile. One enters the town by a very beautiful old gate with fine Romanesque arches. From Manosque one can descend through Aix to Marseille.

To come back for a moment to the coast, one must not forget the famous old town of Eze, just behind Monaco. One enters it by the Moors' Gate, an old gate with its two towers strongly built to defend the fortress. Through the second gate one stands inside the town, which is more fortress than city. Eze is a town whose story has been one long tragedy. It is still inhabited, but hardly inhabited. It has been the scene of warfare through the centuries and bears upon its walls the marks of its chequered story. There is only a tiny fragment of its ancient castle. The story of Eze is told very graphically by Sir Frederick Treves. There is the tale of

[1] The valleys and towns of Upper Provence are described more fully in chapter xvi.

Barbarossa the pirate,[1] and the traitors who betrayed the town to their enemies. It is really no use trying to picture, as Sir Frederick does, the ghastly scene that the capture must have presented. One likes rather to draw a veil over these horrors. The town counted for nothing when Barbarossa had done with it. One is only thankful to know that the traitors met their just punishment. The modern Eze itself dates from early in the sixteenth century, and even so has suffered from the earthquake which devastated Castellane, and later again the lightning from Heaven fell upon its worthless walls.

From Monte Carlo one can mount up to La Turbie, the famous old town upon the great road that led from Rome to Arles. One tracks the course of the road through La Turbie, and even finds it among the olives. The town was important from its height. It was a great look-out place, and also it was a great landmark. It was perhaps one of the chief resting places for travellers who were coming from Rome to the province, and one can easily imagine their joy in finding, after they had climbed the Aurelian Way, so sunny and yet so breezy a resting place. It seems almost too narrow to have taken the great flood of traffic that must always have been passing through.

Every one knows about the monument in La Turbie,[2] of which now there is but a fragment left. The stones have gone to build the houses in the surrounding towns and villages. The tower is a trophy of Augustus to mark his victories over the Alpine tribes. It was placed on the highest spot in the great Aurelian Way, and must have been a reminder to every one who passed of the strength of Rome.

Close to La Turbie is Laghet, a great place of pilgrimage, with its convent standing sharp upon a rugged rock looking over its mountain torrents.

From Cagnes, itself an interesting old town, on the top, of course, of a hill, with its irregular streets and houses and odd chimneys, one can pass to St. Paul du Var, another of the many little fortified towns that have come down to us from the Middle Ages. It still has its old fortifications, and its old gates. It still has its ancient houses, and not even all that restoration can do has been able to spoil it. Its towers are specially beautiful; many of them still have the armorial

[1] His real name was Kheyr-ed-Din.

[2] See below, p. 207.

bearings upon them of the families that once dwelt there. The church, at the very top, has two great square towers standing by, and is itself one of the most fascinating of all the churches of Provence. The treasure is one of the richest in all France. There are beautiful screens of wood, and there is the late, but nevertheless famous, chapel of St. Clement, a little artistic gem.

From St. Paul one will go to Vence, again a most historic place whose history is a little history in miniature of all this debatable land. Its name shows it to be Roman. It was once a great city of temples, and Roman inscriptions still remain. A sort of history can be made by piecing them together. It is thought that it was converted by the famous St. Trophime, and it was a bishopric before the year 400. In a strange way it became the chief centre in the days of the Huguenots. It was attacked by the Huguenot army, led by the famous Lesdiguières. Vence was equal to the emergency. The general was obliged to raise the siege, and he himself, late in life, was converted to the religion that he had persecuted. The walls, towers, and gates of Vence are still there; its church can be found hidden and overshadowed by the houses and cemeteries, and it is one of the oldest-looking churches in all the South of France.

It is said to be built upon an old temple of Mars, of which it retains a good many old inscriptions which are now built into its walls. It is a regular place for artists, and one very charming corner of the old town has been made picturesque by a display of rather vivid local pottery. The market-place is outside the old town. It was, on my last visit, inhabited by a passing show, evidently a circus of a very high order, which had just arrived. There was a small child wandering about in the interior of the show delightedly blowing a kind of squeaker which is used in the Punch and Judy Show, and every now and then stopping to play with the circus puppies. There was the usual group of young men playing the simple game of hop, skip and jump. Two girls were idling about, looking over the latest fashion paper. A man was aimlessly wandering with a large string-bag of oranges. Everything spoke of the sun and the South. I suppose we northern people can never get hold of the spirit of the Sunny South, its extreme abandon, the general feeling that nothing really very much matters. Time is no object. One can sit down anywhere

one feels disposed to ; there is no fear of getting wet or chilled. Somehow Vence seemed to me on my last visit to have this feel about it very much more than the busy coast centres flooded with British tourists.

CHAPTER XV

DRAGUIGNAN TO ORANGE

DRAGUIGNAN can be reached from Fréjus by way of Les Arcs, home of Saint Roseline, the lady of the Roses: only a single tower remains of her father's castle. We would like to have still the little postern door by which she did her secret charities. Draguignan itself is a substantial place, and being sheltered it should in these motoring days attract a good many more visitors. Mountains come well after sea, and though the mountains round Draguignan are not very high, they are airy. I had a charming walk up a gorge and down again (in the dark, which fell rather rapidly); the views are exquisite, and the setting sun wrapped everything in glory. The chief mountain excursion is to the Verdon valley, but there are plenty of others. The town is, of course, the modern growth on the flat, with quite smart shops, and the ancient on the hillside. As I arrived on a Sunday, everything and every one were at their gayest; in the church (a modern one) was going on a class of instruction at one end and a baptism at the other; the voice of the instructor put the baby on its mettle.

There is a good belfry, not of great age, which stands well besides the church tower; as I got the view first, in the evening, it was most picturesque. But the reader need not fear; there is no aqueduct. The town is not of very great antiquity, though it must have been used by the Romans when it was but a hamlet. It began to rival Fréjus in the thirteenth century or so. It was not a place in which to stay long: but it is a quiet restful spot, and perhaps nothing in it was so exciting to me as the leaving of it.

The tale I set down, so that he who reads may not have to run, as I did.

I had made up my mind, at all costs, to journey through the inner country of Var, and had with great labour, at various cafés in the preceding days, worked out a scheme. So I told every one several times that I must start by an early

morning train ; arranged several times for my hot water, and had elaborate discussions with several people about the time my coffee was to come up, and how many croissants I was to have. I ordered also butter, honey, and what not. It is true I was called, both well and early. Hot water (nominal) was in my room already laid on. No coffee appeared. I dressed and descended ; found a salon with coffee cups, and by agitation got hold of some excellent hot coffee and bread ; no butter, honey, or what nots were to be found. Among other things they had said that the 'bus, to save time, would take me to the station. I listened for its coming, but heard nothing. However, when I had drunk my coffee and began to look round, somebody waved in an agitated manner towards the street, and I gathered that my valise was on its way in a hand-cart. So off I followed. As it seemed to make an unnecessary detour, I took a short cut to the station, where I found neither tickets, nor train, nor valise, nor anything. There was nothing to do but wait and see ; but fortunately, before waiting, I saw a blue notice-board which looked as if it had once had a legend, and there I made out something of the name of the junction I was after ; and so, following on, discovered my valise, which mercifully was on a sky-blue hand-cart, easy to recognize, standing at quite another station. Nobody had suggested that there was any "catch" about stations. I made for the ticket-window ; whereon a whistle sounded (it was long after the time for my train's departure), and rushing out I saw a train in act of going off. So I made a dash ; several people held me gently back, murmuring something about "manœuvres," and pushed me back towards the ladies of the *guichet*, who were enjoying the fun from the platform. I demanded a ticket ; they waved me round to the other side, and as all French stations are like the ancient puzzle of "pigs in clover," I got somehow penned in the baggage room, and had to be brought out and guided to the *guichet* like a captive. When I at length asked for my ticket, the two ladies of the *guichet* had much merriment, and decided that it could not be done. I persuaded them to book me as far as they could. When I emerged this time, "all the creatures"—as Lewis Carroll would have said—shouted "*en voiture !*" But I was determined to be dignified, and stalked on to the platform of my moving carriage, whence I distributed brass backsheesh to the porter, and so, like the setting sun in the simile of Bürger,

Lenau, or some one else—" as a king that hath scattered gold among his people, and blushes at his benignity "—departed. I did get there : but I seem to have been the only person who has ever done this particular trip.[1]

The point of all this story is that had I been going by a regular Riviera train, all would have gone like clockwork. As it was, the kind people of the hotel were not only loath to speed the parting guest, but in a spirit of gentle tolerance clearly thought it best that I should repent my folly, come back with my tail between my legs, lunch, and go off splendidly in the Rapide. Then I would have got there quicker and more comfortably, and the reputation of the hotel would have remained unblemished.

As it was, I triumphed, but at some cost. I saw most interesting country. But at my destination, I was reminded of the ancient and profane story, told of several small towns, how a virtuous inhabitant presents himself at the Gate of Paradise, and the Keeper of the Doors, after much discussion, admits him, but adds, " We have never had anyone from there before." So it was with me. I had documents of unimpeachable respectability ; several high-class hotel bills, duly receipted, and a little pack of railway tickets (they only collect them now and then), but I was clearly the " first person they had had from there," at least by the route which I had discovered.

The thing therefore is to plan your routes. Do not be put off ; and make extremely clear to the hotel people that you mean to try them, at all costs, and that they must resign themselves to your lunacy.

To these rambling notes may be added some few more, by way of advice.

If you plan for tickets, and buy them, beforehand, all will be well—in one way. You have your Aladdin's lamp, or magic carpet, but it works only according to schedule. Far better, in my humble notion, to get your through tickets to and from some big centre (Paris or Lyon) and then book as you will. But here comes the warning. French time tables are a *façon de parler*. That you want to go to such a place, and that a train goes to such a place, at precisely the time you want to go, may mean nothing. The equation looks

[1] On a similar occasion elsewhere the train went out festooned with my washing (promised long ago) which excited hotel porters were throwing at me from a basket.

well; but there is an unknown quantity. This lies somewhere in the pages on pages of notes on particular trains, which are all numbered; and he who can disentangle these notes may exist, but I have not found him. You can only go by train 1,001 if you start from a branch line, are "fortified" with a ticket of a peculiar kind, and propose to travel at least 100 (or 500) kilometres, from a station 20 kilometres beyond the point where your branch hits the line of the said train. This can seldom happen. Always inquire of your hotel beforehand; but, even so, be prepared for much the worst: and remember, that the lady of the *guichet* is supreme. Arguing will only land you in a *procès-verbal*, and that may take weeks.

Here is another experience of the oddities of French trains. I had many things to see in Orange and said I would meet my baggage at the station. I wandered sight-seeing, and mercifully came to a certain ancient church which had been locked before, and which I hoped to find open after two o'clock. It was still locked, and I looked at my watch. It was going, well enough, but somehow the time looked odd, so I went off to the cathedral to see the time on the tower. There was either no clock, or only one face on the side inaccessible to me. Mercifully (again) I stumbled on the *Hôtel de Ville*, or *Mairie*, or something, which had a large clock, clearly showing that instead of an hour in hand (my watch had stopped and restarted) I had only time to rush to the station. I got there, found the ticket window shut, and nothing doing. By frantic agitation, however, I got hold of a lady who vouchsafed to go into the ticket office. In much haste she handed me a third-class ticket to my destination, saying that it would take too long to give me a second-class. Off I ran: mercifully (for the third time) I found my luggage lying about casually; caught it up, and was bundled into the train. I travelled most comfortably. The only passenger at all to be objected to was a baby (of course in a smoking carriage), but as it was apparently babbling baby-Languedoc it was a very interesting asset. Baby-French is fairly easy to talk, if one may address the baby in the second person plural (obviously incorrect); but baby-Languedoc was a good linguistic puzzle, and would clearly be too much for many a devoted student of Mistral. All was well that ended well; but why, in the name of Liberty, Fraternity and Equality, does it take longer to give out a second-class ticket than a

third ? especially when the change on a third-class is so much greater ? I give it up. Suffice it that the kind ticket-lady got me a train, as they always will, if you give them their head and do what they tell you. This lady was prompt and smart : in a sort of contrast to the statuesque ticket-lady of the first train-catching incident recorded above, who, with no undue delay in regard of ticket and change, murmured softly and in a far-off, lotus-eating voice . . . *faut* . . . *dé* . . . *pêch* . . . *er, m'* . . . *sieur* . . . *on* . . . *part* . . . as indeed they did.

Here some further remarks about travel in Provence may be useful, though perhaps not necessary to those who have experience. It is easy to travel to Cannes by a *train-de-luxe*. But if you wish to " potter " about the country—which is the only way of seeing it, you must steel yourself for the worst. The local trains—always full of interest, both for the odd people you see (those who can should travel third, or second where there is no third) and for the scenery—are about ten times as bad as local trains in England—and Dante himself could have said nothing more scathing. They are always late, and very late. Every one grumbles, every one somehow contrives to be good humoured. If once, only once, an infuriated mob of passengers would rise as a man, rush and lynch the engine-driver, then we should see what we should see. But alas ! that will never happen. The patient folk murmur gently ; and let the engine-driver carry on his flirtations and eat his garlic in peace. Moreover—and this will come to some people as a blow—registered luggage does not arrive ; or rather, it arrives in a sense only.

Perhaps on this head I may be allowed to insert a short lyric [1] ; which tells its own tale.

I went to Lyons on a train ;
Two sisters, from the South, were there ;
One, bright and gay ; one, proud Disdain ;
But both—ye gods !—divinely fair !

I took the Rapide, due at nine ;
Their slow reached Paris one a.m. ;
Yet fate was kind ; I'll not repine :—
At least my luggage went with them !

And that in spite of a great red official label, RAPIDE !

[1] Since the days of Heine, a writer of travel-books must always attempt at least one.

It is absolutely necessary to cling to a small handbag containing the bed-rock necessities for the night. Do not, on the other hand, attempt to take anything bulky in the carriage. It will cost more, and in the gettings in and out will be a nuisance to every one, but chiefly to its owner. In French trains, you nearly always have to get out round corners. In booking, always (for a single ticket) add the word *aller*—because the trusting ticket-clerks cling to the belief that you can get back in the same day, and expect you to try.

In the lesser hotels you will always be well received. I who write—*moi qui vous parle*—am old, bald, and no doubt ugly, but never in southern Europe have I failed to meet kind hostesses and thoughtful waiting-women, whether old crones or sprightly girls, who look on every stranger with pitying eyes, as if he were a lunatic, "one of God's innocents," who must be watched over with a special care. They shepherd you about, see that you are warmed and fed, and push you somehow off into your road next day.

Honesty reigns in Provence. At a large and pretentious hotel I had to help them to make out my bill, whence they had omitted a day's meals; at a smaller one, they had omitted the "superior" wines which I had called for with my food. They usually add ten per cent. to the bill for service. I do not think this should cover any little special services rendered, and as the exchange goes, we can afford to be generous.

On some routes are departmental motors, and one is always wise in asking if there be any public *voiture* handy.

If the luggage can be sent along, there is no better way of covering the shorter distances than on foot. In the cooler (but sunny) months, Provence is quite a country for the rucksack. The short cuts (*raccourcis*) are often stony, but they are practicable. Rubber soles will help. People generally bob up at odd places, from whom one can ask the road. The uninitiated need only say, in an inquiring voice, "Monsieur (or Madame), pour X . . . ?"—or, "pour aller à X. . . . ?" I hope I need not urge a studious politeness all round, and warm expressions of thanks for little services rendered. Beds can always be trusted, but the nervous, in cool weather, can always ask for a *chauffe-lit*, which will be either a hot brick, or a sort of chestnut-roaster (not quite a warming-pan), or both.

Wines are usually "thrown in"; for a small sum one gets

a better brand. The pink wines (*vin rosé*) are especially good in Provence.

Artists can find any amount of good material in the hill-towns and villages. There are constant *clochers* and *tours de l'horloge*, and glorious narrow twisty streets, often arched over in an inconsequent but most picturesque manner.

It ought not to be necessary—and one must hope it is not—to recommend the utmost reverence in churches or near cemeteries. The Provençaux are a simple folk, and feel very deeply in some matters. The thing is to be friendly as they are friendly and try to be simple as they are simple.

Those who want good cooking and do not mind risking a little in other ways should keep clear of all tourist hotels, especially those which call themselves *de l'Angleterre*, or by similar titles, where they will get the usual international cooking and charges. The sign of the French Touring Club (T.C.F.) assures proper sanitary arrangements.

My experience is that one meets kind and sympathetic people in French trains; at least as long as one does not obtrude one's insularism and one's obvious touristism upon the compartment. Of course the French do not like foreigners owning the railway carriages any more than we should; and no doubt the demeanour of the best of us contrasts unpleasingly with the modest behaviour of the rarer foreigner in our own midst.

On a journey referred to above, I was dunned after Lyons for a small "supplement." Believing that I had obtained a ticket for the Rapide—for which I had indeed specially asked—I contested the point, whereupon all the compartment soothed me down kindly, producing documentary evidence that they had to pay far more than I, and, after I had capitulated as gracefully as possible, taking me out into the corridor to see Mont Blanc, as an erring child that had returned to the fold, and must now have a treat.

One rather vindictive-looking fellow-passenger, indeed, we did find on a recent journey, not in the Rapide, but in the earlier express from Lyons—a good train, which gets you to Paris in respectable time, but carries no dining car. At Dijon our companion jumped out and brought back triumphantly a luncheon-box. There seems to be always something of the primitive savage about us when we eat in the train from paper bags or cardboard boxes. We secrete our store; we sit sideways, and look suspicious. But our friend had the

added joy of watching us starve. What was then his discomfiture when we unpacked a most unpromising looking parcel and put down two for his one at every stage! Did he produce a sausage, we flaunted sausages and galantine! Did he produce the station vintage of Dijon, we, who had stayed at the name-place of a choice brand, went very much better; and when I trumped with a pot of admirable apple jelly, "Black resigned" so to speak, in obvious dudgeon.

But to return to our journeyings. I "pottered" on through country of no special note, but pleasant enough, and to my thinking, ideal for a rucksack. The simple fact is that we must get back to our footwork. The proper study of mankind is how the other men live, and you cannot find that by rushing from point to point, from international hotel to international hotel. Nature has many glories, but man is the measure of all things, and Nature must be studied in her proper setting. Foolish people have written much about want of appreciation of natural scenery among the Greeks, and have pointed out that the Greeks when they do describe some natural beauties at once touch on their conveniences to mankind; the gushing fount gives cool draughts of water, the mossy seat in the natural rock is comfortable to sit upon, the cave-arch protects from rain and sun. Well, were not these Greeks right here, as usual? They did not go far wrong in æsthetic matters.

I made a halt at the "Tivoli of Provence," but tore myself away from its cascades to visit an odd little village whose name, Tavernes, may have had some attraction (Vins is not very far off). On the way I picked up a franc, and a franc on the road to Tavernes is clearly a temptation against which St. Anthony could hardly have been proof. Only Tavernes does not deserve its name. I wandered among the narrowest streets I can remember; no fat men may dwell there; then I made for the church, and heard such a noise issuing forth that I supposed some riot was in progress, the more so as the streets were empty and the one eating-house closed. But it was only the curate giving instruction to the children: in that solitude it seemed as if he were a Pied Piper and the church his dark cave. But at length I met an aged matron, and lo, she was the lady of the barred *café*, which soon she opened and in not so long a time produced a respectable meal. Her son, a young Apollo, appeared also, and we had a talk

about olives, which can be gathered as late as February and March; they are dark and crinkly, but as oily as ever; and Tavernes is a place of olive mills. It has always seemed clear to me amid the rather vague instructions of Vergil that in his day both grape and olive were left on the trees as long as possible. They do this with the grape still in some places and with certain kinds, and the raisiny flavour is thought to give the wine an extra delicacy.

Meyrargues was dull, and so was Pertuis, where I picked up my train for Orange, or would have been but for meeting there a family newly come from Corsica from whom I learnt much of interest about the island. By choosing this route I omitted Aix, but on my next visit I made good, as it is of course a chief centre for everything Provençal. Of Aix Mistral has written most pleasingly in his mémoires, and it was there that his friend Anselme Mathieu, desiring to repeat the derring-do of the old troubadours in the troubadour way, must needs climb up by the creepers to the balcony of a lovely baroness left solitary day after day (so it was said) by her lord. Climb he did, and as he clung overshadowed by the leafage, a shutter opened gently—a hand—yes! a hand—was stretched out—and a pipe was meditatively knocked out upon his skull.

Cavaillon, whither I next fared, brings us into Roman influence again, for its arch is a splendid example of its kind. Probably it is not a solitary arch of triumph, but part of some great building. Carpentras also has its arch, with the usual captives led in triumph. It is pleasing to see on the St. Rémy arch that the captives show no humbled spirit.

From Cavaillon, on the way to Avignon, one passes L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue, whence a road of about seven kilometres leads to the famous Fountain of Vaucluse. The site of Petrarch's house is thought to be beneath the present *café*. But one does not go to the Fountain to study topography, but to dream on the story of a poet's love. There is much that is uncertain about Laura[1]; she was not, it seems, of Avignon itself, but a country maiden; and the place of her tomb is not confidently ascertained, though tradition may be right after all. But that is all the better. The less we know of Laura and of Beatrice the better; let them be

[1] See above, p. 137.

to us what they were to their glorious lovers, ethereal spirits fused with heavenly virtues.

The best of things come to an end, and this particular journey finished, as far as Provence goes, with a capital climax at Orange. There is little in Rome as imposing as the remains of the theatre, with its giant façade or stage background. It is so complete that one can reconstruct in mind the whole edifice as it was ; if one fails to do so, a picture postcard can be purchased which does it for us. I tested the acoustics by getting on to the topmost row of seats and standing in what must have appeared a posture of danger ; it was easy to hear the casual remark of a French visitor at the stage, " That fool will break his neck."

The inscriptions on the rows apportioned to the knights are clear enough still, and being on either side equidistant from the central entrance, suggests that the knights occupied the centre part only of their special rows. The view at the sides cannot have been particularly good.

Orange is a place in which to poke about. Looking from the Theatre I was able to trace pretty clearly the line of the adjoining Arena. Then I descended and hunted for bits of its arches, and sure enough there they were, built up into and round the houses. One should from Orange visit Vaison, where also are good Roman theatre arches, and which in Roman days possibly eclipsed Orange. From Vaison comes our " Diadumenos " of Policlitus (a good replica) in the British Museum.

The Orange arch is the finest of the Roman-Gaul arches as far as lavishness of sculpture goes.[1] What struck me most among them were the carvings of wreckage, masts, ropes, blocks : it is also interesting that the interior fretting of the arches into the well-known pattern of squares does not seem to have been completed.

Archæologists wrestle as to its date and occasion ; but certainly it is long after Caius Marius, and the " Mario " inscribed upon it is probably the name of a Gaulish chief whose parents had, so to speak, given their infant a hair of the dog that had so bitten them.

VAISON

Vaison deserves a fuller description than most of the smaller towns of Provence. It was, as we have seen, a place of the

[1] See for Cavaillon and Orange the chapter on Roman Gaul (ch. xvii)

highest importance under the Romans. At one time indeed it was their southern capital, and it ruled over a considerable stretch of territory. Its remains were really as fine as those of Orange. The theatre was nearly as big as the famous theatre of Orange. There was a fine bridge, a big triumphal arch, a long aqueduct, baths, quays and great houses. Of its present remains the theatre is the most interesting. We know from the remains of the theatre of Orange what a Roman theatre was like; and with that of Vaison to help us too, we can reconstruct a sort of ideal Roman theatre. The Vaison theatre was evidently one of great magnificence as we can see by the statues which have been found there and which are now to be seen in the Municipal Museum. There is a statue of an emperor in his coat of mail; there is the famous Tiberias and there is the beautiful statue of the Emperor Sabine, a statue that shows something of great delicacy along with Roman magnificence. There is also an heroic statue of the Emperor Hadrian. Besides these there are innumerable smaller remains—a head of Venus, a lizard on the trunk of a tree recalling the famous Greek statue of Apollo. There are marbles from the great background of the stage, lamps, funeral urns, and every kind of domestic pottery, cups, saucers, and so on, beautiful vases of glass, large and small. There is one arch in the Roman bridge spanning the space from rock to rock, and though the parapet has been recently restored, we have still the general view of the bridge as it has always been. There are the remains of four great baths, and one can track also what is left of the great aqueduct, though a considerable part of this has been ruined by the withdrawal of stones for building purposes. On the right bank of the river we have the quays of the Roman port, and on the Place de la Poste we can trace by its foundations a fine Roman house. There are mosaics—many in the Musée Calvet at Avignon—many tombs, and in fact everything to remind us that the city was one of the great centres of Roman Gaul.

Besides the Roman remains at Vaison there are other monuments. First the cathedral of Notre Dame, which seems to have been begun in the seventh century, if not earlier. We can trace its rebuilding and its restoration in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. A strange inscription runs round the outside, of which no one can really find out the meaning. I am inclined to think that instead of "Sit ut" in the fourth line, we should read the one word "Situs," but

even so it is not quite easy to translate. It would then run something like this:

"I beg you brothers forgo the parts of the north" (which as we know represented the heathen and the uncivilized tribes to the Jewish mind. Whence the real meaning is "Forgo all that makes for evil") "by following the cloister, because thus you will come into the south" (the south of course represents the light and warmth of religion). "Let the position of these stones remind you that the warmth of heaven from three sides strikes upon the four sides of this cloister, a warmth that is given to the twelve veins" (that is to the twelve canons of a cathedral church).

This does not seem to make very good sense even so, but the chief idea is to keep to the sunny side of the cloister and also to the warmth and light of the true religion, and let the sun which comes from east and south and west and yet smites on all four sides of the cloister in turn, remind you of the warmth that should inspire the twelve living stones who are the canons of the church.

North of the cathedral is the strange little chapel of St. Quenin, with its triangular apse. If the inscription has been the puzzle of archæologists, this has always been the puzzle of architects. Some date this strange building from the very beginning of the Christian era, but perhaps we should put it a good deal later. But the chief interest of these buildings is that they carry on so wonderfully the Roman tradition, and give us as it were a passage of transition to the general civilization and arts of the Middle Ages. It is at Vaison that we can see most clearly the dominance of the Roman type, and we can trace most easily its gradual passage into something lighter and more beautiful.

On the other side of the Roman bridge is a fourteenth-century town built on the cliffs of the left bank of the river. Like so many of these towns it grouped itself round a castle, and it was strongly fortified. One sees still the ramparts, a semi-circular tower with its loopholes, the first gate and then the usual gate with portcullis. On the old tower has now been placed a belfry. Within the city itself there are a good many interesting remains; chiefly the ancient cathedral that we now know as the Church of the Higher Town. It was built in the fifteenth century, but increased in later times by different builders. On the top of one hill are the ruins of the castle itself, which belonged in the old days to the Counts of

Toulouse. It holds of course the chief and highest part of the rock. Like so many of these castles its form is dictated, at least to some extent, by the ground. None the less it is of the ordinary rectangular type. There is a great deal of ruin about it, but one can trace quite clearly the big hall on the first story, and can make out quite clearly many of the rooms, while below there are the usual dungeons.

In the old town there are many fine ancient houses—some of the Renaissance period—and the old market-place has trees and fountain, while it is looked down upon from all sides by great houses all of a regular type, with odd courtyards and solemn gates. Of later buildings there is the Bishops' Palace, rebuilt in the eighteenth century. The bishops lived at Vaison for over a century, and each one seems to have brought some improvement or other to the palace.

Such is the old capital with its remains from Gallic times, Roman, Christian, and Middle Age. It stands in a charming bit of Provençal country, and embodies in itself the history of all Southern France. It was at Vaison that Aubanel wrote a great many of his beautiful Provençal poems. He always delighted in the ancient city, and his love for it shows itself in various ways in his letters and in his works.

Cavaillon has its Roman remains, like so many of these small towns near the Rhône. There is also an interesting rock staircase where there is a little hermitage, and the cathedral is possibly of the ninth century. There is a pretty cloister with its garden in the middle, and one of the chapels of the cathedral was built by a friend of Petrarch, the Cardinal of Cabassole.

From Cavaillon we can go to Apt, again a Roman town, of no particular interest but with plenty of material from Roman buildings to be seen in its houses and churches. There is an ancient crypt, perhaps of the tenth century, and ancient chapels both in the town and on the rock.

Carpentras, one of the other chief towns of Vaucluse, is also Roman. Its old cathedral has a curious carving over the chief south tower. Near the cathedral is a Roman arch that was once a gate. There is still one of the city gates standing, the Porte d'Orange.

CHAPTER XVI

THE VALLEYS OF UPPER PROVENCE

THOSE who motor down to the Riviera should find time, if possible, to see something of the valleys of Upper Provence. Apart from the valleys that lie near the coast, or that can be easily reached from the coast, there are those that lie further inland, which nevertheless are very well worth exploring, certainly in March or April, when the rigours of winter are over in the upper districts, and the flowers are beginning to show. Of these upper valleys, those of the Tinée or the Vésubie are perhaps the best known, but further west there are some admirable valleys as well, and these are being opened up by the route over the Alps which takes one from Nice up to Aix, as well as the whole of the upper valley of the Var. It will be worth while, therefore, to give some little account of these valleys of Upper Provence, and some of their principal places.

One of the best centres is Digne, at a meeting place of three chief roads, long known as a centre of hot baths, and a well-known place for tourists. It has a perfectly charming situation, with the background in winter of snow-capped mountains, and magnificent rocks nearer to the city. The old feudal town goes up to the sides of Mount St. Charles and round about the old tower, but the newer quarter is built along the banks of the streams and round about the hot springs. It is high enough to be a good bracing place for summer, and yet it is quite possible in winter time. Just out of Digne is the interesting little suburb of Le Bourg, where there is a magnificent old Romanesque church built on the foundations of one of the fourth century. There are still remains of frescoes to be seen. The position of the cathedral is very fine, with its row of fan-like steps which lead up to its west door. In the big market-place is a statue of Gassendi, the Epicurean philosopher, who ought, no doubt, to have been represented in some lively attitude, but who, in point of fact, stands there looking as sober as if he had been a veritable Stoic.

From Digne one can wander about to all sorts of charming places. There is, for instance, St. Michel de Cousson, which one reaches by paths that run through the woods. Or if one feels in an historic mood, one can track out the route that Napoleon followed in 1815 after his return from Elba. One will make for Barrème, near where Napoleon lunched on the Fourth of March in a village now deserted. From there one can follow the road to Castellane. The house is still shown at Digne where he spent some time entirely undisturbed by the Prefect, or by the General in command, who had prudently withdrawn.

There are some very fine defiles some fifty miles from Digne, at Barles and Verdaches, or one can make for the valley of the Blanche up in the north, finding one's way to Seyne, itself a well-known summer residence, and an old town that has had a very chequered career. It was at one time a frontier town. It has been devastated both by pestilence and by fire, and one can see to-day traces of its ancient history—its old towers, some of its walls, a Romanesque eleventh-century church, and other relics of its once greatness. It nestles charmingly in the valley of the Blanche, with the mountains standing up bare and snow-clad behind it. It is a favourite place for summer because of its delightful shady walks, which take one through the different woods, and along the different little watercourses. One can work one's way into the neighbouring valley of the Ubaye and so on to Barcelonnette.

The Ubaye Valley is a charming Alpine valley, formerly apart from Provence and living a life of its own. At one time it was allied to Savoie, but it now belongs again to Upper Provence. As we go from Digne, working up the river towards Barcelonnette, the general appearance of the country grows more imposing, and on our left side are tall bare peaks, with just a meagre cultivation upon the slopes of the hills. We pass the Lake of Lauzet, with its dark pines all about it. At Martinet the valley of the Laverc opens up, with a path that leads to an old Benedictine abbey of the twelfth century.

Barcelonnette itself is a pretty little town with the usual thermal establishment, and is now well known as a summer centre for the French. It has gone through its various vicissitudes; it has been burnt several times; it has been struck by lightning; but there is something of its old history to be seen here and there. There is, for instance, the old tower that belonged to the old Dominican convent, which is of the

fourteenth century, though it has been restored. Barcelonnette is itself an excellent centre for the valley of the Ubaye, and one can ascend thence to several of the fine passes. If one goes south one descends to the valley of the Verdon, but this is perhaps more conveniently reached from the south through St. André, whence two valleys—that of the Issole and also of the Verdon—turn north. The railway runs by the valley of the Verdon. One first passes Thorame and then Beauvezer, built on the side of an ancient village, and another of the summer tourist centres which is growing constantly in popularity. Close by are the famous fine gorges of St. Pierre. Colmars comes next, whence one can see the waterfalls of the Lance, and whence one can reach also the Lake of Allos. This little lake, which is well known for its fine trout, is surrounded with rather severe-looking mountains, but makes a delightful centre for excursions. There are a great number of little lakes all about it. From the Lake of Allos one can climb to Mont Pelat. If one wishes, one can go on from Allos to Barcelonnette, unless one prefers to make a round from Digne, through Seyne, and thence south from Barcelonnette down the valley.

To see the great canyon of the Verdon one must go to Castellane, south of St. André. Castellane itself is an interesting old feudal town, though like so many of these towns in the highlands of Provence, it has been several times attacked and in part destroyed. Like Vence, it was attacked by Lesdiguières and contrived to repulse him successfully. Its old streets, the belfry, its Romanesque church and an old hexagonal tower, remind one of its antiquity. There are plenty of excursions round about it, but that of the great gorges of the Verdon is without doubt the finest.

Very soon after leaving Castellane one gets into very grand and imposing scenery. The grand canyon is only eighteen miles from Castellane, and it can now be visited quite easily, thanks to paths and tunnels so arranged as to allow one to make one journey of the best part of the gorge. There are seven tunnels through which one must pass, and therefore it is wise to be well shod and to carry torches. To see the entire gorge requires fine weather and a proper outfit, as well as a guide. All information can be had from the Syndicat d'Initiative of Castellane. West from Castellane is the big plateau of Valensole and on its edge are Moustiers and Riez.

Riez makes a fine centre for exploring, whether northward in the direction of Moustiers, or eastward along the valley of the

Verdon. Not long before the Verdon meets the Durance is the fine old ruined castle of Gréoux, and the Verdon, which specializes in gorges, has another fine, though smaller, canyon at Quinson. From Moustiers, itself a charming little town, once rich and full of life, but now almost deserted, founded originally by a colony of monks from the Abbey of Lérins, and with its old church, medivæal houses, and fine doorways, one may take all sorts of pleasing excursions, of which perhaps the best is to Fontaine-l'Evêque, on the left bank of the Verdon, where passed the great road in old days from Fréjus to Riez. If one crosses the Durance one will find plenty of charms at Manosque, Forcalquier and Oraison. Manosque is the great centre of all this region. Thanks to its canal it is able to export large quantities of currants, fruit, almonds, and so on. Perhaps its most striking relic is the Gate of Saunerie. The Porte Soubeyran is also fine.

Forcalquier stands grouped round a little circular hill, and reminds one very much of the designs by which people illustrate the Hill of Purgatory in Dante. It is a fine old town, and was once the capital of Provence, and the seat of a bishop.

The most striking perhaps of all the towns of Haute Provence is Sisteron, where we are already beginning to touch the Alps—the true Alps. It is not by any means an easy town to describe. It groups itself in the oddest way between its river and its rocks, of which the most imposing is the rock of La Baume, on the river's left bank. But it is the old town on the other side that has the greatest charm. The tall houses have been crammed in just as best they could be fitted there. They seem to rise from the river bank as if they were trying to reach the great citadel on the top. One could not believe that it would be possible to fit in anywhere another cubic inch. The little streets and alleys of this old town are most remarkable, leading up and down between the river bank and the main street, such as it is, of the town itself. One sees a dingy, dirty, little opening that looks as if it were only one of the town drains, but if one takes one's courage in one's own hands and ventures to descend it, one finds it is a curious little narrow, twisty street—if streets they can be called—and though one will no doubt meet a dead cat or two, and have to pick one's way through all sorts of dirt, one will be rewarded by the extreme quaintness of the street itself, and of the buildings through which it leads.

Sisteron was the birthplace and home of Paul Arène, who

SISTERON

was buried there in the cemetery, and there is little doubt that the scene of several of his stories can be identified in and about Sisteron. It has a magnificent old church, the apse being of the ninth century, and altogether it is one of the most remarkably picturesque towns in all France. In fact it may be said in one way to be quite unique. The houses are not quite as abruptly built as at Pont-en-Royans, but none the less the general effect is just as fine, and must have been very much finer in the old days when the bridge, built according to the French expression "like a donkey's back," was still standing. There is a ruined monastery[1] on the left bank of the river just outside the town, and from whichever way you approach it, it is singularly and charmingly grouped. I advise no one to pass this way without visiting Sisteron. As it lies on the motoring road to Grenoble it will of course now be visited by an increasing number of tourists, even if they are only passing by, and it is bound, therefore, to be better known, as it deserves to be.

Here is Paul Arène's account of the ruined cloister at Sisteron[2]:

Sister Nanon possessed among other small holdings a little garden on the other side from the town, not far off, in the midst of vaults half-broken and crumbling walls; around it were the arcades of a cloister, with a gnarled tree of great antiquity, last witness of the opulent love-of-good-things of cloistered monks. She called the tree the Fathers' Pear-tree.

Sister Nanon ate the pears, calling down evil things on the Revolution which had destroyed the Priory, and Domnine found in them a supernatural flavour, like that of some forbidden fruit.

Formerly there had been a monastery there, brushed away with so many others. Tradition still speaks of the splendour of the domain. But the great fishpond, translucent paradise of carp, has to-day hardly water enough to quench the thirst of the redbreasts; cellars worthy of Thélème have come to look like oubliettes; in the refectory—now a stable—the donkeys hardly dare to bray, so great and alarming is the echo that comes back to them from the lofty groining.

The garden was the home of many "praying mantis," the "white ladies" as they are called, and Domnine, true spiritual child of Sister Nanon, never doubted—despite their hard glassy eyes and their formidable mandibles—that they prayed to heaven, when, with an almost human gesture, they joined devoutly their serrated paws.

They show, people say, the way to lost children: one day I shall go into the woods, thought Domnine, and lose my way in the evening; the white ladies shall show me the way.—"Domnine," ch. vii.

Travellers who are thinking of visiting the Basses Alpes (or

[1] Or church, with some monastic buildings. See above, p. 109, note.
[2] "Rochegude" is clearly Sisteron.

Haute-Provence) in spring, may care to know something about the fishing in the rivers. The best thing is to get hold of the Prefect's notice which gives the time of closed seasons. These one could see in any shop which goes in for fishing appliances. It will be seen that the streams are divided into different lists according to their predominant fish—either rivers with trout, rivers with trout and barbel, or rivers with other fish. The trout closed season in rivers on the first list is from 21st October to 31st January, and the following are given as trout streams : Ubaye, Ubayette, Parpaillon, La Blanche, La Sasse, Les Riou (of which there are two), Buech, Jabron, Vanson, Verdon, Issole, Var, Calomp and Vaïre.

THE ROUTE OF THE ALPS

As every one knows, the P.L.M. Company runs cars from Paris to Nice. The real Alp route begins at Evian, and the part which affects us at the moment is that which runs from Barcelonnette, the stage beginning at Briançon. Briançon, every one knows, is the highest town in France, a fine old fortress city with its old town, the usual twisty streets, and the ramparts thrown round the whole. The road runs down through Villars and St. Martin, over the Col d'Izoard, thence descending in the Casse Déserte to Guillestre, then over the Col de Vars—a height of over two thousand metres—and down to St. Paul on the Ubaye, and thence through a very narrow gorge with interesting rocks and remains of an old fortress, to Barcelonnette. Thence the route runs from Guillaumes over the Col de la Cayolle, leaving to the right the road which would take us to the Col d'Allos. Guillaumes lies at the meeting of the Var and the Taube, and has a fine old ruined castle. There is a road thence to Puget-Théniers by the Col de la Roua, but the ordinary route goes down to Entrevaux, made picturesque by its old walls and its drawbridge. Thence to Puget-Théniers, from which the road follows the line of the railway through Villars, past Bonson and Levens, to Nice, and meeting on the way the Tinée, running down from the north, and the Vésubie, running down from the north-east. One passes through the magnificent gorge of Chaudon, where tunnels have to be cut in the rocks.

There are fine excursions to be made on the way if one cares to stop, whether up to St. Sauveur on the Tinée, or up the splendid valley of the Vésubie, where St. Martin is a centre

of winter sports, and has admirable hotels. Soon on the east one passes the Estéron at its meeting with the Var. This part of the Estéron valley has splendid cliffs on either side. The national road is generally left on the right, and one goes through St. Isidore, entering Nice by the Faubourg of Sainte Hélène.

On this run one cannot of course take much luggage, but arrangements are made to send on luggage by rail, and one can make one's own stops and excursions on the way. To travel by this route certainly gives a magnificent opportunity to get to know something of the upper regions of Eastern Provence.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ARCHÆOLOGIST IN PROVENCE

WE have been so far the tourist—let us hope the enlightened tourist, with an eye to architecture, history, literature, but chiefly concerned with the people, their life and their little ways.

It is, however, impossible for anyone to travel in Provence without turning (even amateurly) to archæology. It is a land of the past and it bears on its surface its age-long story. The Romans, of course, dominate ; commanding untold labour, they could quarry and build " monuments to last longer than bronze." But we can go further back than the Romans, who, as conquerors at least, came rather late in the day. The Phœnicians had their trading settlements—all on the sea coast, of course—and do not seem to have interfered much with the inhabitants of the inland, with whom, indeed, they were bound to be on friendly terms. In those days a seaport was a danger to its native owners. It meant raids and looting ; and so—here, as in Greece and Ionia of old—the chief centres were up the estuaries and the rivers, far enough to be removed from the danger of pirates, but accessible enough by the light-draught ships of the time. So it was that Tarascon and Arles were founded by a race, whether Celtic or Ligurian, which was not blind to the advantages of gain, and knew already that export and import were the basis of land commerce. To those people and their need the friendly, not to say oily, Phœnician commercial traveller, came pat ; he served as a convenient clearing house, and no doubt both carried on very happily together and were pleased each with their bargains.

The story of declining Carthage (or Phœnicia) and mounting Greece is well known. But the interesting point is that Greece did not—as Rome did later on—rush into headlong war with her rival. She was not given to sledge-hammer methods. Rather with that quick prescience which marked every Greek, they saw and felt that Phœnician supremacy was a trifling thing ; masters of the sea, in one sense, they were not in

another; they left their great trade routes to take care of themselves, and would not spend money on navies.

So the Greek went west as well as east, and for a long time after was indeed torn asunder between the two. The Sicilian expedition, disastrous to Athens, finished their western dreams; but meanwhile they had made good their footing along the more likely coasts, and Carthage was being steadily undermined. As early as six hundred years before Christ the Phœnicians had led a quite serious expedition to the fabled El Dorado of Provence, and Marseille may rightly be called rival of Carthage itself. Marseille grew, attracted more settlers from the homeland, and herself founded strong colonies on neighbouring coasts.

But it was not the Greeks who were to win the spoils of Carthage. Marseille, alas, could not always protect her offspring; Nice was in difficulties, and the mother city was fain to call in the help of that greater power than ever Greece and Carthage could have been. Rome came, saw, and before long conquered: and here ends for the time much of the romance of the history of Provence, though magnificence and architectural splendour was liberally thrust upon her, and though her insubordinate tribes were honoured by the chastisements of the great Marius.

Romance begins again with the first Christian missionaries, whether they were the Holy Maries or not. Rome softened, and her real greatness showed up the more. Of architecture of this period we have remains indeed, but it is the sculpture which often rivals the best Greek work. This we see best in the numerous and admirable sarcophagi at Arles and elsewhere.

Dowered as is Italy with "the fatal dower of beauty," Provence, as Rome weakened, became the prey of the Northern Goths, whose architecture is clearly visible at Carcassonne and elsewhere, and of the Southern Moors, who seized, as had the Phœnicians of old, but in a fiercer spirit, the sea coast. Free at length under its Counts, Provence became the Provence that we all think of—the Provence of the Troubadours, the nest of those earliest singers of Europe—the Provence of chivalry and crusades—the Provence of legend and imagination—the Provence of "Good King René," from whose weak hands a king more powerful in craft than arms filched it away. It is this Provence that Mistral and his circle have sought to revive. They do not want to put history back, but believing that this

was Provence's good time they want the old spirit to inspire the body corporate of to-day.

The history of this " Renaissance " has been touched on in previous pages. It does not need telling here in full. Mistral himself, in fact, has done so in his Mémoires. But it does lend a new glamour to Provence, and that is why we have from time to time made reference to Mistral's works.

The sum total of all is this : that there is probably no corner of Europe where keen observation will " pay " better, where archæology, philology, history, architecture, literature, ethnology, and other sciences, even if learnt with only " a little learning," can have such play, singly or combined, as the corner of France we have chosen as our subject. There every stone speaks ; every knot of children outside the village school is a study ; the spoken words of the passing farm-labourer, the particular type of figure or arabesque in a sculptured doorway, the breadth or narrowness of the streets (narrowing, as a rule, towards the sea), the foreign influences seen, whether in Saracen outworks, or in an Italian-looking " palace," the seaports, like Fréjus and Narbonne, now high and dry ; the inscriptions gathered together at Nîmes and Arles ; the Sunday dress in the bleak Camargue ; all these repay the intelligent eye and ear. In fact if ever one wanted to learn how to observe (rare faculty !) Provence would be the best of training grounds. To the rushing tourist it can only mean a few hasty impressions and a bundle of picture-post-cards. But our advice is—Travel slow ; look at, and love everything.

HOW THE ROMANS SPENT THEIR TIME

Anyone who goes through the south of France will notice the great proportion of old buildings that were devoted to mere pleasure. The arenas and theatres dominate a whole city, and yet what we have left of arenas and theatres is only a tiny fragment of what once was there. We have, for instance, next to nothing left of the great baths, except of course the charming fragment at Nîmes, and one must add many times as much again to the ruins that are still left to get an idea of the Roman towns, whether of Gaul or elsewhere.

There was a method in this life of amusement that was so much fostered by the authorities of Rome and the provinces. The Roman mob was never easy to control under the Empire,

and it was felt that so long as they could be amused they were likely to be harmless, and the easiest way to lead a great mass of people was by coaxing them, and therefore the provinces as well as the capital, as a matter of mere policy, built at enormous cost their theatres, baths, and arenas.

The baths were immense buildings, of which the baths proper were only a part. They were like a great club, a great gymnasium, a great promenade all in one. The great Roman baths occupied enough space for a small city. Some of the great halls are said to have been as big as a modern cathedral, and one, in fact, we can meet with in Rome, the church called St. Mary of the Angels, and it is the largest church in Rome after St. Peter's. But the baths themselves, properly speaking, were considerable. You could have them hot, or cold, or steam. You could have special swimming baths, or you could use the greater baths that gave you room for quite a long swim. All round were rooms where you could sit and talk, galleries where you could do gymnastics, music-rooms, lecture-rooms, tennis-courts, and not far off even a small theatre and a race-course. There were gardens, arcades, galleries of pictures or of statuary, libraries, everything in fact that one could possibly want to kill time. The people, however, could not long be satisfied with these quieter amusements ; they wanted excitement. They had, therefore, their theatres, and besides the theatre their arenas. Every one knows that while theatres belong to most countries, it was Rome alone that developed the arena. The great amphitheatres that are left to us are built all in the same style. They are perfectly simple ; they are meant merely for use. There are vaults for the wild beasts and for the prisoners, the huge space in the middle, and thousands of seats arranged in grades all round the ellipse. The ruins of the amphitheatres that we have still left to us allow us to follow the utmost detail of all that we learn from writers throughout the time of the Roman Empire.

One can hardly look upon these great arenas without a feeling of the greatest horror. People must have fallen very low if they needed amusement of that sort, and yet they did. Captives and wild beasts were brought from the uttermost ends of the world to make a Roman holiday, whether in Rome itself or in the provinces. There were legions of gladiators all kept in special training for the shows. They fought sometimes singly and sometimes almost in battalions. The proof how these spectacles dulled the sense of those who came to enjoy

them lies in the various devices that were made at different times to import some novelty into the spectacles. They would, for instance, arrange with the help of some great aqueduct to flood the arena, so they could have a naval battle done in miniature. The water was deep enough to drown those who were upset from their ships. Sometimes they had elaborate arrangements by which a forest would arise from the ground, and in these forests wild beasts, that were hunted as if in real life. Most often they give unarmed and helpless slaves, and often Christians, to wild beasts that had been starved some days before, or possibly an elephant would provide the sport, goaded to trample upon the wretched victims.

One thinks, as a rule, of the splendour of Rome, her imperial majesty, but whenever one sees arenas it is wise that we should remember this other side. Besides the arenas there were also great race-courses. These were built almost in the same style as the amphitheatres save that they were oblong. There was running down their whole length a low wall that they called a backbone. It would often be decorated with sculpture, and beasts and statues would be placed along the top. At either end of this wall were the turning posts, which the charioteer must turn sharply, and where the accidents nearly all occurred. But sometimes when these rather tame sports began to pall upon the spectators they would bring into the circuses, also, something of the slaughter and bloodshed of the arena. The theatres gave a better type of spectacle, for the Roman theatre was based upon Greek models. It is true that often it was a very inferior copy of the Greek. Sometimes the Roman plays were almost parodies of the plays of the Greek dramatists. It is perhaps easier now to reconstruct a scene in a Roman theatre than to picture the so-called sports of the arena.

The ancient theatre was in a semi-circle just as our own is. There was built at the back a great permanent stage, and in a great part of what is with us the pit, was the orchestra, which originally was used for the dances and the chorus. With the Romans the orchestra became a place for the most privileged spectators. They never had music in their theatres except perhaps some flute which would direct the movements of the actors. In the centre of this orchestra there would generally be an altar of Bacchus, and on the stage above the whole action itself took place. As the scenery was permanent one had to imagine every now and then the background when it was sup-

posed to take place in the country or by the sea, but generally the scenes were contrived to take place in front of some building, and therefore the permanent scene or background generally fitted the play. It was divided into three parts, and in each part a gate or doorway. The central gate was called the Royal Gate, and it was used for the entry of the chief actor. Those on the right and left were used for the less important actors, and between two other gates or doorways at the side were outlets, one of which was supposed to lead to the country, and the other to the sea. It is thought that there was a certain amount of movable scenery, at least in later Roman times. We know, of course, that there were all sorts of apparatus by which people could be let down from above, and whereby the gods would descend to wind up, as they did very often, a play which had got too complicated for human aid. It is said that in the later Roman theatre people tired of ordinary plays, and imported even there all sorts of savage spectacles, and even the fights and massacres of the arena. Sometimes the theatre was used merely as a means of bribery and corruption. Money would be scattered among the spectators, and all sorts of gifts would be given them as they went away. It is a melancholy fact that as the Roman Empire drew to its close everything in the way of amusement became more and more degraded. The society of the ancient world was hastening to its fall.

ROMAN GAUL

Although a certain number of the Roman remains in Gaul have been mentioned as they occurred, it may perhaps be convenient to put together a general account of such remains, or at any rate, of the more important ones. No doubt a good many travellers will interest themselves directly in this antiquarian side of Provence. Those who desire to go into the matter deeply will be wise if they consult some of the more serious studies, such as that of Sir Theodore Cook, and also, of course, the many special works that apply to a particular town or district, which can nearly always be had from the chief bookseller of the place in question.[1]

As we go down the line to Marseille before we reach Provence, we pass the extremely interesting little town of Alesia. This is connected none the less with one of the Provençal monu-

[1] On Nîmes I have used Bazin's excellent and complete study (Hachette).

ments, as we shall see later, for it was here, as most people know, that Cæsar won his great victory over the fine General Vercingetorix. With our "Cæsar" in hand, we can go over the ground and trace out the lines of the earthworks and so on. Moreover, we can find some extremely interesting early remains at Alesia, such as a dwelling of the original inhabitants—the Mandubians—the Gaulo-Roman dwellings and buildings.

Farther on, but off the actual direct line, is Autun, with its two splendid gates—the Port d'Aroux and the Port St. Martin. These will throw some light upon the remains of other gates at Arles and Nîmes.

At Vienne we find certain most interesting and extremely admirable remains. We shall not appreciate or understand the Maison Carrée at Nîmes unless we have seen and studied the Temple of Augustus and Livia at Vienne. It comes, of course, an easy second to the Nîmes temple. It is probable that the inscription has been correctly deciphered by working through the socket holes of the old lettering. It seems to run: "To Cæsar, best and greatest, the divine Augustus, Emperor, and to the divine Augusta." It has six fluted columns on the front, on either side there are five, and there are pilasters round the *cella*. Not far away are portions of the old forum, and there is an excellent gateway that leads to the theatre. But what is the most interesting perhaps from our immediate point of view is the pyramid. It stands not far from the river, rather southward of the town. People have considered it to be all kinds of different things—the turning point of some great circus for instance, though we have no remains of the circus left—others call it a mausoleum or tomb. It is, however, almost certainly a War Memorial set up by Fabius after his victory over the Allobroges. This pyramid, as it is called, is an obelisk resting upon a portico or "Janus," that is to say with an arch on each of its sides. There are columns at either corner. We shall find it interesting to remember this Vienne pyramid when we are thinking of the mausoleum of St. Rémy, and also of the little monument which was set up by Marius to commemorate his great victory not far from Aix.

A little farther on, though again not upon the direct line and not yet in Provence, we come to Die, or as it was called in the old days, Dea Augusta Vocontorum. It has a Roman arch about which later buildings have clustered so as to make it a gate. The west porch of the cathedral has four fine granite columns, and these seem to have belonged to a temple—per-

haps a temple of Cybele, to whom the town was dedicated. This will perhaps remind us to look in the neighbourhood of churches and cathedrals for pillars that may possibly be of Roman origin ; we shall almost certainly find some in the Baptistery at Fréjus.

Entering Provence at Montélimar, we shall first come across the great Roman remains at Orange. Of these I have already spoken when dealing with that place, but it may be well here to give some little account of one or two dimensions of the theatre which will help us to understand its real vastness. When we come to the theatre at Arles we shall find that what is lacking at Orange is to be found at Arles, and the other way about. As we approach the immense wall of the theatre towering right above the houses of the city, we are really approaching the back of the Scena. Probably it owes its preservation to its convenience as a kind of bastion, which makes an outer protection to the hill on which any fortification would always be set. It is, however, one hundred yards long and more than thirty-five yards high ; it has its three great entrances and sixteen different bays. Then above there are twenty-one arcades built in, of course, with an entablature above, then two upper rows pierced all the way along with holes in which rested great beams which sustained the enormous awnings that were spread over the theatre in hot weather. One great interest of the theatre at Orange is the way in which it uses the hill against which the upper part of the seats are supported. The immense wall or scena seems to us far too big for the theatre itself, but it was built large for two reasons, in all probability : first, because of the resonance which it would give to the actors' voices, and secondly, to keep off the wind. One reads still the word *equites* to the right and to the left upon the first three rows. These, of course, were the seats reserved for knights, and from the position in which this little inscription is to be found, I am inclined to think that it was not so much the whole of the first three rows that were given to the knights, but rather the best part—the central part—of these three rows, extending as far right and left as the two inscriptions. The entire structure is built without cement, and stands by its own weight. It is made, of course, of great blocks, but such parts above the arches as would not show are filled with ordinary rubble stone. In the old days it would have held over forty thousand spectators. At present it is being restored carefully as an " historic monument." One

has to think very hard in order to imagine back all the ornament on the inner side of the great wall. Ordinarily this fixed scene would represent either a palace or a temple; that at Orange must have represented a great palace. One must, therefore, in one's mind's eye restore again all the great pillars that stood outside, whether of the structure itself or the marble with which the niches were decorated, and all the corridors and passages above by which one got from one part to the other. A good deal of indications of all this are to be seen still. If you stand at the highest point of the theatre you will see the remains of the arena also, and it is possible to track out the remaining arches of this arena built up into some of the houses. The fact that so immense a theatre and so large an arena are side by side in this city, which did not play as great a part in the history of Roman Gaul as did Arles and Nîmes, will make it quite clear how determined the Romans were to be provided, at whatever cost of labour and material, with everything that could make for their amusement.

Calpurnius Siculus, in Ecl. viii. lines 29 ff., describes an amphitheatre, possibly (or probably) the Colosseum. He suggests that the awning did not cover all the seats, and this indeed is what we should naturally suppose. He mentions several reserved seats. These questions, as far as Nîmes is concerned, are settled by an inscription "Scholasticorum," "Reserved for (Rhetorical) School Masters" (it is comforting to find schoolmasters not reckoned among the riff-raff), and a ticket picked up with the following: CAV II CUN V GRAD X GLAD VELA ("Block two, 'wedge' five, row ten, gladiatorial show, awning seat"). This last word is added exactly as the Spanish bull-fight tickets bear the word "SOMBRA" ("shaded seat" or "seat in the shade").

Of the great arch at Orange, different views have been held. It is rather popular in these days to look down upon the arch at Orange as being, indeed, massive enough, but a falling off in taste from those that we find further south. Others take quite a different view, and claim that though the arch of Orange does not vie with others in its historic interest, yet in point of decoration it takes a first place. Certainly one cannot help being struck at first sight with the strength of the sculptures; there are flowers, fruits, ships, sirens enticing the ships to shipwreck, all sorts of marine things such as ships' requirements, masts, cordage, and so on, and there are the usual trophies of arms, captives and warriors or gladiators;

there is a fine head of Phœbus, and there are excellent battle scenes ; there are names upon the shields, one is Sacrovir, and one is Mario—evidently some chief—and there are other names. Sacrovir was defeated in the year 21 during the reign of Tiberius. If the investigations of M. Bondurand are correct, the arch was dedicated somewhere in the year 24 or 25, then later on it seems to have been restored, the restoration being also a tribute to the greatness of the Emperor Tiberius. The building is no doubt massive, and it does not at all vie in gracefulness with the arch of St. Rémy, still less with the two arches on either end of the Pont Flavien, of which either entrance is decorated with Corinthian columns, and, over the columns, with lions. The arch was not improved by being made in the Middle Ages into a dungeon.

Of Vaison I have already spoken at some length, but those who go to Orange to study Roman remains should make a special point of going on to Vaison. The Roman theatre at Vaison is, of course, a very much smaller affair than that at Orange. At Carpentras there is, as we have already noted, a fine arch, which was the entrance porch, or at least acted as such, to the first Romanesque cathedral. It is probably of about the same date as the arch of Orange. It may have had what is called an attic on the top. It is a single arch as that at St. Rémy ; its reliefs still remain. It shows on either side two captives bound and made fast to a trophy of arms. They are meant to represent, no doubt, the hill tribes who were still holding out in the days of Augustus. One warrior is clothed in sheep-skin, and near him is a curious knife. On the other side of the trophy is a figure in more soldierly dress with a battle-axe. Some think that this figure may be Sacrovir himself. If so, this Carpentras arch is set up in commemoration of the victories of Augustus, and is followed by the arch at Orange in the next reign, which nevertheless commemorates the same victory. In the interior of this arch are fine *antae* or engaged columns.

The next arch upon our way is that of Cavaillon, which, as is well known, has probably been removed and also considerably restored. It is composed of four sets of pillars forming a square with sculptures and with arches connecting each pair of columns. It may have been a part of some other building, but yet it may also have been definitely intended as a monument of victory. Certainly it must originally, so far as we can see, have had its four arches, its cornice all round, its Victories

at the angles, and very likely on the top a pyramid or obelisk like that we have seen at Vienne. It was therefore an arch or "Janus" of some sort, but whether actually built as a triumphal arch or not we cannot altogether say. If it was, it would probably commemorate the victory of Domitius over a combination of the native tribes. Cavaillon was a centre of this population and therefore would be a natural place for some sort of triumphal monument.

Of St. Rémy, which would naturally come next, we have spoken already, but a few words may be advisable upon the precise nature of the two great monuments there, and their relation to others. If we have seen the pyramid of Vienne we can understand quite clearly that the monument at St. Rémy is a very wonderful and beautiful development of that simple form of quadruple portico or double "Janus" and pyramid. Here we have the portico no longer on the ground, but raised above its foundation by a space which permits of very large and elaborate reliefs. Then in place of the obelisk on the top there is a little round Greek temple. It is, therefore, a two-story building, and a blending of Roman and Greek monumental architecture. The figures on the reliefs are very finely dealt with; on one side there is a hunt, and on the other three vigorous battles between the Romans and the Gauls on the bank of a river; the frieze gives gods and various monsters with bats' wings. Under the little round temple are two statues. It is most difficult to decide exactly the history of this monument; certainly it was not originally a mausoleum. The excellent people—Sextus and others—who dedicated the monument to their parents, seem merely to have appropriated the monument as a family mausoleum, and one does not know exactly whether to admire more their cool cheek or the warmth of their piety. Some critics regard the building as quite old; it rather depends upon the view we take of the sculptures. As to the beauty of the architecture every one is agreed, but different views are held as to the reliefs. Without being an expert in such matters, I can only feel that they would very well suit a comparatively early date, though they were executed under Greek influence, as indeed the whole monument appears to be. But there were still plenty of Greek architects to be found round about these parts of Provence, so while it is quite tempting to place the monument fairly late, and see something Byzantine in its mixture of style, one may yet be perfectly safe in supposing

THE ROMAN REMAINS, SAINT-RÉMY

that it goes back to the time of Julius Cæsar, and so was set up within two years or so after his defeat of Vercingetorix. If this is so, both monuments at St. Rémy are of the same date, though one must certainly confess that that would not be one's first impression. It is, of course, quite possible that the three worthies whose names occur in the inscription may actually have been the original setters-up of the monument. Even though they were the sons or grandsons of some chieftain who had taken the name of the great Julius' house when he received the citizenship, there is no reason why, with money and a competent architect, they should not have been responsible for this charming monument. If we accept the earlier date, of course the building becomes much more interesting at once. Marius, standing beneath the little cupola, is looking towards his own encampment. Some have even seen the figure of Marius himself by the side of the river on the relief. If indeed it was Julius Cæsar who set up this monument to his uncle, one must allow that there had been a very rapid development indeed between the simple obelisk or pyramid such as we know that Marius set up himself at Pourrières, and this very fine work of art at St. Rémy. The marine monsters up above will refer, possibly, to Marius' digging of his great canals.

The arch, at any rate, is Cæsar's monument to his own triumphs. No doubt Cæsar would desire to leave some very lasting works to show that the conquest of Gaul had been a genuine thing, and that it was now an accomplished fact. Certainly the arch which he set up is beautiful and striking in itself and in its position. It has a length of about forty feet, and has only a single vault. It is, therefore, like the arch of Carpentras. The arch is small; it was probably what was called quadrilateral. On the north side is Julius Cæsar (headless) with his hand upon the tall Vercingetorix. On the north-west, Rome is seated triumphant on a pile of arms, and there is a bound prisoner close by. Another carving gives the Gallic chieftain bound to a trophy, and a figure emblematical of conquered Gaul weeping. On the remaining side are two more prisoners—man and woman.

The two monuments stand on the north side of the "Little Alps" and look right over the plain towards Avignon, where southward are the crags in which we find Les Baux.

The striking thing in the remains we have at Nîmes is their completeness. Not only have we the magnificent arena and the baths, but also we have, in what is called the Maison Carrée

and its precincts, the old capitol of the city. If we want to trace the history of a Provençal town, we cannot possibly do better than select Nîmes, and do it very thoroughly. We shall not do so here for the excellent reason that it has been done very well by Sir Theodore Cook,[1] with whom one may venture to disagree on many points, whether minor or major, but he nevertheless has given us all that is valuable in the history of Nîmes, and has also made an excellent study of the inscriptions which survive in the museum in the Maison Carrée itself.[2] Inscriptions have been found which make clear what we otherwise might not have known, that Nîmes was the centre of the worship of the god Nemausus. The first settlement at Nîmes of the most ancient race of which we have any knowledge must have been somewhere round the fountain where now are the Roman baths. There are Celtic inscriptions in the museum written in Greek characters which make it quite clear that Nîmes was originally *Nemau*, and that even in those early days it was an important centre, being at the meeting of four great roads. One of these roads ultimately became the great Domitian road which ran into Spain. The first visitors to Nîmes were probably the Agæans, and later the Phœnicians, on their usual journey to find tin in the mines of Sorlingues and elsewhere. It was a short cut to save the passage round Spain by the sea. The Greeks of Marseille were in regular touch with Nîmes. Later came the Carthaginians, though we have no actual inscription at Nîmes, as we have at Avignon, to tell of their activities. But it was after the Roman conquest that Nîmes really became great. Augustus himself surrounded the colony with walls and gates, and this we can see by the inscription which stands over the "Gate of Arles." The colony bore the proud name of Augusta along with its old name of Nemausus. It is probable that the Domitian Way came into Nîmes by this Arles gate.

The Maison Carrée, as it is still curiously called, was in the forum, and was indeed itself the capitol.

The great amphitheatre of Nîmes is more or less its original height. One can work out the original design of the great Roman baths, rather hidden, of course, by modern re-arrangement. We should, of course, also reckon as belonging to Nîmes the great aqueduct called the Pont du Gard. There are besides very important traces of the canal which brought the streams

[1] Better (in French) by Bazin (Hachette).

[2] Some of these (from Bazin) are discussed presently.

of the Eure over fifty kilometres to the water tower, from which they flowed into their various conduits. The archæologist will therefore find at Nîmes a veritable nest of ancient monuments of the highest interest and importance. It is very fortunate that the barbarian hordes which invaded Provence from time to time were so busy plundering that they had little time to destroy. Where we find ancient monuments disappeared or disappearing, it is generally because the inhabitants have used the stones for their private purposes. It is in this way no doubt that many of the great Roman cities of Provence have next to nothing left. Fortunately, in the Middle Ages, Nîmes was rather poor, and could not afford to build much even with pilfered stone. In fact for a time, Nîmes of the Middle Ages was only a part of Nîmes of Roman times and Nîmes of the present day. It is no doubt this happy circumstance which has saved us much of Nîmes from destruction. One big work of Roman times has indeed disappeared—the remarkable basilica of Ploutine. As for the Maison Carrée, it fortunately became private property. At one time it was turned into a church, and when again it was left to the tender mercies of the inhabitants, being only in stone and not in marble it survived where the capitol of Rome itself had long ago disappeared. As every one knows, it was erected to the Princes Caius and Lucius Cæsar. It is quite small—less than ninety by fifty feet, and about the same size as the temple at Vienne, which, nevertheless, somehow looks rather larger. It is clearly built by a Greek architect, and has all the little elegancies of a Greek temple of the best kind. Before my first visit to Nîmes I was engaged in an argument with some scholar, who should have known better, who assured me that I would not find in the Maison Carrée those delicate little inequalities and departures from mathematical exactitude, which, as we now know, go so far to make the beauty of the Greek temples. I was naturally most keenly on the look-out for just these particular points in the building, and though many of the pillars have suffered considerably, the steps have been modernized, and in all sorts of other ways original planning has been obscured, it is still quite clear, even to a not over-practised eye, that the little irregularities of the Greek temples at their best are certainly present in the Maison Carrée. But one does not need to rely upon one's own weak observations ; learned persons have established the matter beyond all controversy. The curve of the sides of the temple is reckoned to be about

five inches in a hundred feet. The temple is worth walking round and round again and again, and being studied from every possible point of view. One should examine very carefully all the carving, both of the cornice and of the frieze.

The arena of Nîmes is interesting in various ways, partly because we have a fair number of inscriptions still surviving showing for whom places were specially reserved. It is not as large as the Arles building, but in its present restored state it quite certainly has a fine air of completeness, especially in its exterior, its gate, for instance, and the carving which forms an arch along the top. Like the arena of Arles, it was at one time filled up with houses and there was a church in the gallery above. The little column of the window can still be seen. It must be for experts to say how the Nîmes amphitheatre will compare with the Colosseum, the great amphitheatre of Pola, and those of which we have remains elsewhere. Like those others, it is made of enormous blocks without cement. The blocks were brought some five miles. It is almost certainly later than that of Arles.

Not the least interesting of the remains at Nîmes is the little ruined temple, ruined indeed, but still retaining its old shape. It is quite certainly a Roman building upon the site of the old Celtic temple which they erected to the god of their stream or fountain. It is called now the Temple of Diana. There is no reason why it should not be so called, because inscriptions tell us that Diana was one of the deities included in its dedication. The same inscription tells us that both building and ornaments were due to the munificence of the Emperor Augustus. The inscription was not actually in the temple but in the fountain of the nymphs or *nymphæum*. But the Temple of Diana was on the site of the old Temple of Nemausus, and it is distinctly interesting to remember that the ancient god was still retained in the Roman dedication. Of this so-called temple, charming as it is in its decay, and unique in being a temple to a god of a spring, we can nevertheless in mind restore much to its original shape. There seems to have been a porch, a façade with three arches of irregular design. The vaulting of the cella is of great architectural interest, the ribs somehow supporting themselves, as it were, on nothing. There are niches which no doubt had statues of various gods, and the temple was evidently regarded as a very precious jewel, since the most elaborate arrangements were made for draining off any flood water.

The little bit of the baths which we now see is a little difficult to disentangle from the modern garden arrangements, but really one cannot altogether quarrel with the garden itself since the whole setting is particularly charming.

It would be as well to consider here, before we leave Nîmes, the great erection called the Tour Magne. It is clearly built in imitation of the large and, as it must have been, rather vulgar memorial of Augustus at La Turbie, is a tribute to Augustus from the citizens of Nîmes, and is Nîmes' oldest building. No doubt there was a huge effigy on the top, as there was at La Turbie. The building of this tribute to the splendour of Augustus may seem to suggest a very whole-hearted admiration of the inhabitants, that is to say the original inhabitants, of Nîmes to their Roman overlords. Sir Theodore Cook, who studies very carefully the Nîmes inscriptions —a work which was waiting to be done, and which he has done very well—seems to conclude both from them, and from other inscriptions elsewhere, that the people were whole-heartedly enthusiastic for the Romans and for those in authority. Being rather more historian than archæologist, I am strongly inclined to take another view. While, of course, the inhabitants of the province could not fail to recognize some of the great advantages which they owed to their civilizers, I can hardly think that they ever really acquiesced in a government which showed itself, at any rate in most parts of the Empire, as singularly selfish and sometimes cruelly selfish. There may,therefore,have been a certain amount of self-interest in the building of this great tower to the honour of Augustus. Certainly, if buildings give happiness, Nîmes did owe a great deal to the generosity of Augustus and the favouritism which he certainly showed to the colony of Augusta.

From Nîmes we pass naturally to Arles, and if Nîmes is Roman, Arles, as we have already seen, is thoroughly Greek. It is true we cannot see much Greek influence in the amphitheatre, but after all, it was hardly possible to deviate from the ordinary Roman type. This amphitheatre at Arles has, in the opinion of some people, lost very considerably, and in the opinion of others has gained, by the presence of the mediæval towers built on to its upper walls. For my own part I regard the Arles amphitheatre, though less perfect, as very much more picturesque than that of Nîmes, but our real interest must always centre at Arles in the exquisite Greek theatre. One can hardly realize when standing among its ruins that it is

the same size, or nearly, as the great theatre at Orange. The stage of Arles was some forty-two metres long, and according to the usual plan there was in front and below the orchestra in a semi-circular form, and then all round the semi-circular seats facing the west. On the outside of the theatre, which shows the three rows of arcades one above the other, except where the great wall of the background intervened, we see the three stories or stages still at the so-called Tour de Roland. The arcades of the theatre were much more highly decorated than those of the arena, and of the theatre as it is at present, we have only some of the seats, and two very beautiful columns part of the unchanged background—probably a temple. Remains found near the theatre show that the great wall which formed the background was entirely covered with marble. The most interesting findings about the theatre will be seen in the Lapidary museum, except the Venus, which is, of course, at the Louvre. In the Middle Ages, since the theatre could not, like the amphitheatre, serve as a fortress, it was devastated. The people of Arles were not the first to do this ; the Athenians themselves would take the stones even from their temples to build up their fortifications. One has no idea why the two columns or the tower are called the columns or tower of Roland, but the tower was for some time clearly an ordinary dwelling-house.

Inscriptions help to make it clear that Greek dramas as well as Roman would have been acted in the theatre of Arles. It does not matter from which angle one approaches the theatre, it is always beautiful. One feels grateful to Orange for having retained its immense wall, which it no doubt will retain, provided that there are no earthquakes, for many centuries yet. But having the wall at Orange, one feels somehow that the perfectly entrancing ruins of Arles tell us everything else that we want to know while gaining immensely in picturesqueness by their very desolation.

The Venus of Arles to which we have referred is a justly famous statue, and like many other Venuses has been restored in a way that does not suit the pose at all. We can never tell, of course, what was the original position of the arms, and there is no reason whatever why the goddess should not have held an apple in her right and a mirror in her left hand, for the apple and the mirror are the regular attributes of Aphrodite. It is quite possible that it is a copy of some really first-rate work. The marble is probably from Mount Hymettos. The figure is

THE THEATRE, ARLES

very delicate and, as has been justly said by Sir Theodore Cook, holds a middle place between the two groups of Greek statues of Venus. The great drapery swathing suggests that we have here one of the many examples of Venus rising from the sea, and her arms would possibly be by her side holding up her drapery.

Other statues and altars found at Arles are grouped together in the Museum of Antiquities along with a large number of magnificent Christian tombs. Most charming perhaps is the dancing girl. The inscription to Calphurnia, the daughter of Marius, I have mentioned elsewhere, and I can only conclude that it is set up by Julius Cæsar to the honour of his cousin. There are of course many remains in Provence of which we have some knowledge, but which no longer survive. One of the most interesting is the "Admirable Arch" of Arles. It seems to have been rather of the style of the arch of Orange. There are a few fragments left from which the design of the arch has been partly reconstructed.

As we go further we shall find those remains of the Roman occupation which have been mentioned separately elsewhere—the bakehouse of Fos, the charming arena of Fréjus, its aqueduct, its ancient Roman columns in the baptistery, and the remains of its theatre, to say nothing of its magnificent seaport. The monument of La Turbie really completes our excursion through the Roman remains of Gaul. It celebrates Augustus' final victory over the rebellious tribes of the neighbouring Alps in 12 B.C. The monument is overdone; it is absurdly heavy, and its chief aim seems to have been to be monstrous. In general design it is perhaps a spoiled copy of the plan which produced so charming a work at St. Rémy. In its turn the great monument of La Turbie possibly suggested the great tower at Nîmes, and one can only wish that we had less of these two colossal monuments and more of the "Admirable Arch" of Arles, and also of its exquisite theatre.

INSCRIPTIONS OF NÎMES

The inscriptions of Nîmes, better than those of Arles, give us an opportunity of seeing something of the life of the inhabitants during the Roman period. At Arles the inscriptions are largely official, but at any rate on a less humble scale than those at Nîmes, but somehow Nîmes lets us a little bit more into the common everyday life of the people. At Arles we find special

notice of seamen, shipbuilders, and ships' carpenters. Then we have already spoken of the Guilds of raftmen. At Nîmes we get greater variety. Fortunately most of the simple inscriptions on tombstones give the occupation of the person to whom they are erected. Following the collection by M. Bazin, we find at Nîmes the manufacturers of "fire-blankets." These blankets were part of the precautions against fire, and were wetted thoroughly and then would be thrown over a fire as soon as possible. The little guild of manufacturers of these wet blankets erected a stone to some member who, curiously enough, has a double "x" in the middle of his name—Carexxius Severinus. Then there were carpenters at Nîmes as at Arles, and they erected a stone to a senator whose generosity had enabled the baths to be opened earlier than otherwise. At Nîmes there were also raftsmen, or "skinmen." In these skins apparently they transported their olive oil. The word "Sess" in another epitaph clearly refers to a maker of chairs; the word "Musicario" also tell us of a maker of musical instruments, whose wife was very properly called Festa. Then there was a paper manufacturer—Cartarius; there was a worker in bronze, some of whose little statuettes we may perhaps still possess. Apart from the actual titles, there is constantly some representation of the work of the deceased person above the tomb. There are, for instance, a pair of scissors on one tomb, a chisel of a stone carver on another, very appropriately—and there is constantly a suggestion of agriculture. For instance, on the tomb of a labourer and his wife there is a plough drawn by two oxen, and the husband is himself guiding the plough.

Those who have watched the extreme care that is shown towards flowers along the Riviera, who have seen the men with the watering pots going round in dry weather, and other persons taking off the blankets from the flowers in early springtime as soon as the sun's rays begin to warm the earth each morning, will not be in the least surprised to find that there were waterers whose business was clearly to look after the gardens. One charming inscription may not be a tombstone at all, but possibly was set up over a shop. There is in bas-relief a woman sitting by a counter with something, probably a bouquet of flowers, in her hand, and an inscription which we may translate literally—"I only sell my flowers to lovers," or, since the line is a line of poetry, perhaps we may render—"I sell the bright forget-me-nots that grow for happy lovers."

There are innkeepers, doctors, students of law, gladiators of

different kinds in the arena, so that we can be quite sure that there was no department of life that was not thoroughly represented in Nîmes. It would be interesting, but does not serve our present purpose, to consider the large number of altars which have been found at Nîmes, which certainly must have been in its way a very pious and devout city. There are, however, some very charming family monuments that give us a little insight into family life. Here we find those touches of nature that make the whole world kin.

Titus Secundus and Pompia his wife, to their admirable and much regretted son, a young man of noble example, who ought not to have been carried away so prematurely.

(He was only seventeen years old.) It is interesting to note that this inscription has spelling mistakes, which suggests that they were quite humble people. The names are often pretty. Daughters often have diminutives from the name of father or mother. A daughter of Maximillus will be Maximilla; a little girl of eleven is called Elaphion, which means, of course, a fawn ; a girl is called Dorcas, which has of course the same meaning, and a boy is called Delicatus. It is nice to find that slaves who would have been freed, had the deceased lived longer, are not forgotten. Tombstones are erected to servants, and in all sorts of other ways one is able to see that there was plenty of kindly feeling to be found in the family life of Nîmes.

Perhaps this little summary may help those who go to study the museum at Nîmes to find a renewed interest, not only in the inscriptions, but also in all the little tender things that take us back to the common everyday life of Roman days.

CHAPTER XVIII

PROVENÇAL CUSTOMS, SUPERSTITIONS, LEGENDS, AND FOLKLORE

THE people of Provence have excellent memories. They have not forgotten the great victories of Marius, and, as we have seen, they still speak of the Mount of Victory, though instead of the Mount of Victory they now say "The Mount of St. Victoire." They are not conscious when they speak of Meyrargues that they are speaking of the field of Marius, or when they speak of Fréjus they are not conscious that they are speaking of the Forum of Julius, but they probably are quite aware when they speak of the fountain of Marius at Aix under its title the "Fouen de Mari." But they are probably not at all aware how far many of their simple customs go back into antiquity. They are a people wrapped up in tradition, and their dances perhaps go back to Greek times, and have suffered very little change. Many of their pretty local customs must go back to very early times indeed.

Most people keep May Day, and certainly the little girls of Provence seldom fail to keep the old festival. They keep it entirely to themselves, and will not let their brothers or their friends meddle in their games and in their processions.

Here is one pretty little custom which almost certainly goes back to the worship of Maia, and was very likely introduced with the founders of Marseille. There was, of course, the Roman Maia as well, but it is very likely that the custom goes far beyond Roman times. Perhaps travellers may come across more of these little festivals.

At Montélimar, on the last day of April, the farm labourers would go and plant a may tree in a particular part of the town. They have a three days' festival. The first is given to religion and everybody goes to church, bearing little branches of hawthorn flower. The next day is the day for gaiety. The labourers go from farm to farm, and there is much singing and dancing, then all is feasting. The third day they all

come together in a field and there is a great ploughing competition. It is thought that the ploughers of Montélimar are of special excellence. Unhappily the festival was cut down in 1818 to a single day, and with many other festivals it has now disappeared.

While, of course, it is very dangerous to see in every modern custom or survival, traces of some ancient belief or festival, one is perhaps fairly safe in tracing back a great deal of the ceremonies of the modern festival to reminiscences of some sort of antiquity.

At La Cadière, at different times in the spring but generally somewhere in May or early June, there is the procession of the Virtues, which possibly goes back to very early Greek times. This little village lies between St. Cyr and Les Lèques, and near by was the village of Tauroentum, which was certainly founded by the Phoceans. First a bonfire was lighted, and then all the bays and inlets of the sea were thoroughly explored. Next morning the procession set forth for the hermitage of St. Cyr. At the head of the procession were two men carrying a large bunch, or rather basket, of flowers, and in accordance with the language of flowers this basket full of blossoms suggested the different virtues—blue meaning charity, violet humility, and so on. Along with this procession went the blessing of the fields, and when they got back there would be the great service at the church, and the basket of flowers would be hung up in the porch.

It is sad to think that so many of these old customs, which were, of course, largely suppressed by the Revolution, have only feebly raised up their heads again in later times. The old custom, at any rate, looks like some reminiscence or survival of a festival of Flora.

The Tarasque has, or had, a festival of its own. It was revived by Mistral on the lines laid down by King René. The good King was always most anxious to keep up all these little local customs and ceremonies. It used to be divided in two parts—about the end of May and towards the end of July. This latter date would coincide with the festival of St. Martha. It began, of course, with fireworks that were lighted actually under the nostrils of the image of the beast. Those who carried the figure would, on the explosion of the fireworks, agitate the tail with great violence to see if perhaps they could strike some of those who were standing by. Some sort of tournament would take place, and then the figure of the

Tarasque was solemnly taken to do homage to the statue of St. Martha.

On St. Martha's Day some girl of the town would be dressed in blue satin, and would lead the figure of the Tarasque with a thin ribbon of silk. She carried in her hand a little bowl of holy water, and clearly enough represented St. Martha as she brought the terrible monster back tame and humble.

King René merely wanted to perpetuate the story of violence and cruelty being dominated by gentleness and purity. But it is evident as we study a little more clearly other legends of Provence, and indeed elsewhere, that there are plenty of stories of terrible monsters being tamed and subdued in this way. For instance, there is the Drac in the Rhône; Arles had a dragon; Marseille also had a dragon from which the inhabitants were delivered by St. Victor. In fact, there are plenty of dragons and serpents to be found all through Provence. It is just possible that there is some real history behind these strange stories. Some people think that they may represent the remnants of an older population who would make raids from time to time upon the new settlers. Others are inclined to suppose that in these parts there might have been strange creatures still surviving, which, though not really dangerous, would nevertheless have a very awkward looking appearance if one met them. It is perhaps hardly worth inquiring whether one or the other of these theories be correct, but it is quite certain that the district that lay behind Tarascon and Arles would be a very likely spot for the remnants of some barbarian horde to settle.

Monsieur Bérenger-Féraud is inclined to think that we might have here a relic of the story of Marius defeating the Barbarians. If so, St. Martha will be a reflex of the strange Syrian prophetess who went about with Marius giving oracles and otherwise inspiring his troops. This question has been discussed above (chapter xi).

A good many of the curious customs surviving along the coast come without doubt from the time of the Saracens. Such, for instance, is the Bravade, which used to be a sudden call to arms or mobilizing of the young men of the village. This survived for many years as a kind of quaint ceremony, but it is quite likely that it goes back to a time of very genuine terror when rapid mobilization was above all things necessary in case of a Saracen raid. Apart from the custom of the Bravade itself, there is another interesting survival in what

we call the Abbés of Youth. One of the foremost young men was always appointed chief, and he would be called the Prior. Sometimes there would be both Prior and Abbot. There were special little privileges given to these two leaders, and the canvassing for the position was sometimes as serious as that of the canvassing of a Member of Parliament. We hear of these Abbés of Youth at Aix, Forcalquier, Manosque, Sisteron, and elsewhere.

Every one likes a bonfire, and the people of Provence are by no means backward in their love of lighting one on every possible occasion. The great day of course, for the big bonfires is the festival of St. John on the 24th of June. But the fires are also lit on the patronal festival of the village or town, and also on any other occasion of great joy. Sometimes it would accompany the ceremony called the Bravade. At Pertuis, on the festival of the Epiphany, there would be in the old days a big bonfire carried on a cart and actually burning while the procession went on. The Abbots of Youth would follow, and then no doubt the officials of the little town. The bonfires of St. John's Day are, of course, not peculiar to Provence. It is possible that there may be some form of sun worship latent in this old custom. Monsieur Bérenger-Féraud tells us of a little village in the Upper Alps which is sunless during the winter until the 10th of February. On the dawn of that day, shepherds of the village warn the inhabitants of the coming festival with fifes and trumpets. They then choose one of the older inhabitants, who is called the Venerable, and all the villagers are commanded to prepare an omelet.

At the appointed time they all surround this leader, omelets in hand, and dance round about him a farandole. When this is over they march in procession to a certain bridge not far from the village, the omelets are placed on the parapets of the bridge, and dancing is continued until the sun rises. As soon as the light penetrates into the valley they return back to the village, and each family solemnly eats its omelet.

It is possible, therefore, that there may be something in this lighting of fires which suggests some very primitive trace of fire or sun worship.

The people of Provence are particularly conservative in everything that has to do with family life, and the baby from its birth must be put through a little series of ceremonies that have been traditional for many centuries. They have all sorts of curious ideas—not to say superstitions—about the

month in which one may be born. For instance, children born in March are always thought to cry more than children born in any other month, because the vine at that time of the year seems to be covered with little tears.

It is always supposed that children will grow up to resemble closely their godfathers and godmothers, and the greatest possible care is taken in choosing the godparents. The utmost solemnity is observed as to the order in which the baptismal party goes to church. There are always offerings of confectionery to the parents and relations of the child, and the scattering of copper coins when they leave the church.

There are some very curious customs in Provence with regard to the declaration of love. The old story of Gyptis reminds us that the offering of a cup of wine, even to a stranger, was equivalent to a declaration on the part of any young woman. But in the villages of Provence there are all sorts of odd ways in which the question may be put, and either rejected or receive a favourable answer.

In the little tiny village, that is now deserted and wrecked, of Six-Fours, close to Toulon, a girl who was prepared to become engaged would make what is called a *fougasse*, and would set it with a little jar of wine somewhere outside her house. It is said that the builders of houses even used to make a special little tiny niche on the outside wall. Of course everybody knew, and her lover would go and eat the cake, drink the wine, and leave in its place some little tie or something of silk which he had worn that day—usually a Sunday. If he was the accepted one, the girl, next Sunday, would wear the colour of his offering, or possibly would wear in some way the little bit of silk itself. Otherwise, the young man would sorrowfully go and tell his friends the *fougasse* was not for him.

The exchange of gifts in this way used to be quite a common way of settling questions of this sort. A handful of oats, for instance, was a way of saying "You may go." Or, if the young man ventured so far as to enter the family kitchen where the whole family would be sitting in winter time, and the daughter of the house desired to dismiss him, she would get one of her friends to go to the fire on the hearth, take up one of the branches that were burning there, and set it upright in the chimney so that it burnt away by itself. That was a clear indication of refusal.

In a little village not far from Barcelonnette, things used to be done in a much more formal way. The young man,

accompanied by his parents, would go to the house of the girl, who would be surrounded by all her family. No doubt the matter would have been arranged beforehand. The father of the young man would solemnly ask for the hand of the girl in marriage. It was part of the game that this should be received with the greatest possible surprise. Ultimately a favourable answer would be given. The father of the girl would then take the two young people by the hand and leave them standing for just a moment in the best parlour. He would then solemnly bring them forth again. From that moment the marriage could be officially announced in the village.

In fact it was always a little dangerous for any young man to be unacquainted with the local customs. There is a delightful story by Paul Arène of Jean des Figues, who, in very wet weather, had had all his suits of clothes thoroughly drenched, and having need to call upon one of the chief men of the village, was obliged to go to him in his dress clothes. This was regarded as a declaration at once, and, to his great annoyance, he was at once accepted.

In the same little village of Fours, near Barcelonnette, the marriage ceremonies are always as complicated as those of the proposal. When they are starting out to the church, the father of the girl must give her a glass of water, at the bottom of which is a piece of silver or gold. This is supposed to suggest that he is now no longer responsible for her upkeep. The bride must drink the water and pocket the money, and then she should cry a little to show her sorrow at leaving her own home. During the ceremony the two families remain entirely apart. When the young couple kneel at the altar, the bride always spreads a little bit of her skirt or apron so that the bridegroom may be able to kneel upon it.

When they leave the church the bride's father takes her towards an old boulder not far from the village, upon which she sits. Each of her friends and relations comes and gives her a kiss, and then there takes place a mock fight between the relations of the bride and the relations of the bridegroom. When it is over they go back to the village, but this time the two families walk together.

There used also to be a very curious ceremony at the door of the house where the newly married couple were to live. Some one was placed inside who would stubbornly refuse to open because, as he said, they were waiting for a new mistress

of the house. Some one in the bride's party would then go forward and say that the new mistress was here. The doors would be thrown open, and three small loaves would be solemnly presented to the bride. Two of them she presented back to those who were already in the house, and the third she gave to those who were outside. They then entered the house, and the bride and bridegroom partook at once of a bowl of soup together.

It is quite clear that there are in these details of these curiously conservative little village ceremonies some reminiscences of marriage by capture, and of certain ancient marriage ceremonies which go back to prehistoric times.

The coast villages of Provence make a great deal of the game called Targo. This is played on boats, and to each is fitted a little ladder and a small platform. Upon this platform stand the combatants; they have lances in their right hand, a shield in their left. When the word is given, two boats row one towards the other, and the skipper of each boat does his best to manœuvre into the best possible position for knocking over the adversary. Sometimes they will cease rowing as they pass the opposite boat so that they can skim past it at the shortest possible distance. The point is, of course, to knock your enemy into the sea. Very often both fall together, but gradually it is possible to get down to two champions, between whom the final battle takes place.

This Targo can be found in Greece and in parts of Italy, but it is especially a game of Provence. It is obviously of great antiquity, and we find mention of it right back as far as the time of Good King René. It is just possible that it arose from some primitive combat on sea which answered to the combats in the arena on land when captives had been made from some enemy army. Probably those who acquitted themselves well might be given the recompense of their life.

THE SUPERSTITIONS OF PROVENCE

Of course the Bretons are far beyond all other French people in picturesque and interesting superstitions, but Provence is not without its share. The interest of many of them, and certainly of those which are discussed by Bérenger-Féraud, lies in the fact that we can sometimes trace a very ancient origin, going right back into prehistoric times. They have, of course, their ordinary ghosts, and they have also their

ordinary witches or sorcerers, whom they called Masques. As often happens, any odd character would be assumed to be a masque or witch. These masques are often met with at lonely cross-roads, and it is said that they compel those whom they meet to dance until they fall dead with exhaustion.

The Provençals are very particular still about choosing the day on which anything is to be begun, and though they are passionate lovers of sport they are very careful not to hunt or shoot on some particular days, certainly not on All Saints' Day or Christmas Day. Terrible stories are told of those who have ventured to break this well-known rule. They usually meet some enchanted animal which leads them into the gravest danger, and then turns round and mocks at them in human language.

Certain people are supposed to be able to bring on rain during dry seasons, and sometimes also to drive away untimely storms. This is a very common belief, and one need hardly discuss it. It is, of course, frequently the *curé* of the village who is called upon to bring down the rain or to send away the storm. Sometimes special prayers would be directed to a certain saint, or a special festival of the saint might be arranged. It is well known that this power was claimed in various ancient countries—Rome among them—by certain of the leading priests or Flamens.

Grottos and lakes are specially regarded as being under the power of certain strange spirits. Lakes, especially, have often their own particular legend or story as in so many countries.

A well-known sea-tale is that of the chickens of St. Mandrier. These were stolen birds which were carried off in a small ship, and while all other ships were moving easily with the breeze it remained stock still. The anchor refused to come up, and, in fact, it was there like a painted ship upon a painted ocean. Only when the theft is restored are they allowed to set sail.

We often hear in these days of the superstition against lighting three candles at the same moment. This is said to be an Irish superstition, but at any rate it is to be found also in Provence. Some think that it has to do with the Three Fates, but it is quite impossible to be too sure on a point of this sort.

Of all the interesting Provençal survivals, not the least interesting is the Bottle procession of Boulbon, every first

of June. Boulbon is a little village, once an important centre of defence, at the foot of the "Martagnette."

Boulbon has a little narrow street, a hill behind, and the battlemented walls of its castle. A little Romanesque Chapel of St. Marcellin is perched on the top of a hill, and thither flock the faithful, as they did in the old days, their path flanked by ruined oratories. The description of the Bottle Festival I borrow from an article by M. Laget,[1] who in turn has taken his from M. Revoil, the well-known architect. On the eve of the festival the usual procession forms, headed, of course, by its banner. It is a line of men, two by two, and each carries a bottle of good wine. The *curé*, in a special cope, the mayor, and other dignitaries follow.

At the chapel, the *curé* offers the special prayers for the Blessing on the Wine; then turns westward and scatters holy water, on which every one draws his cork, and drinks a little of the new-blessed wine. The mayor offers his glass to the *curé* and other priests present.

Whether the festival still continues in its old form, I cannot say. There is no dancing, but the return from the chapel is at a smart pace, with the bottle snugly held on the angle of the left arm.

THE FARANDOLE AND OTHER PROVENÇAL DANCES

In these days we all look for "origins"; everything has been "evolved" from something. While it is obvious that this fascinating game can be carried much too far, it is yet fairly sensible to expect to find, in a thoroughly Greek corner of Provence, some traces of Greek influence. Nothing persists like folk-lore, folk-tunes, folk-dances. We may even go further back, and seek to find on the Mediterranean shores, especially those which were easily accessible, and which either led, or seemed to lead somewhere (as the western parts of France, and the coasts of Spain and north-west Africa were supposed to lead through the straits to unknown lands of unknown wealth) traces of civilization older than the Greeks, and to which the Greeks themselves owed a debt.

Thus the Spanish and Provençal bull-fight may really go back to Crete and its "Minoan" days, when the bull was both played with by acrobatic bull-teasers—men and women—and was also slain in hot combat that the life and the power

[1] "En Provence," June 1924.

of the bull, mightiest at the moment of his death, might pass into the spectators of his doom, who were also (oddly enough —but there is some trace of it in Spain to-day) his worshippers.

How does dancing arise? From two primitive instincts which even the most degraded "throw-backs" of humanity do not lack, love of rhythm and desire for company. Rhythm enters into everything. One watches the village blacksmith hitting a red bar; he cannot hit it every swing, as it has to cool between whiles—but he hits his anvil in between, which gives us the pleasant "tin-tan" of the smithy, and for which I can see no cause save in preservation of the rhythm of the swing. Rhythm in speech, emission of words in rhythmical breath-jets, gives us poetry; alternations of intensity and slackness give us rhythmical accent; add tone, and you have beginnings of music. Rhythm in motion gives us the dance; and the Provençal dance is especially a motion rhythm, dependent for help on that which can mark rhythm, and nothing else, the drum. In the Greek tragedy, the chorus danced to their place in rhythmical movement to the sound of a flute; in Greek warfare, the same simple instrument sent forward, in rhythmical march or run, the storm-troops.

We cannot be wrong in finding constant Greek traces in western Provence.[1] It is at least likely that the Greek settlers of Marseille would bring with them their religious dances, and would in time impart them to the natives. If, as is thought, they brought the worship of Cybele, we know that dancing, sometimes—but not always—of a rather wild kind, belonged to her cult. Religious dancing continued in some places through Christian times and is still found at Seville. There was, however, always a danger of irreverence, and church dancing was frowned upon. Probably it was only driven outside the sacred building, and no more, and sure enough at Santiago da Compostella on a great Feast day, I found some elaborate folk-dancing going on, immediately after High Mass, between the buttresses of an ancient church. It is said that dancing in the choir of the church continued some time in the Monastery of the Cordeliers at Antibes; and there are revivals of such ancient dances at (for example) Barjols on the 17th of January, commemorating the reception of the

[1] I make use, in these remarks, of a good article on Provençal dance in "En Provence," July 1924. The question of Greek influence is touched upon in a note on Greek Arles (see p. 39), for which I have laid other articles in the same monthly under contribution.

relics of St. Marcel on that date in 1350. At Manosque on May 12th there is a similar dance in the evening.

Apart from religious dances, there were great military dances which possibly served as "physical jerks" to the troops, and helped also to work up their martial ardour. It may be that relics of these remain in some of the secular dances seen annually in certain Provençal villages. Dancing being so natural to mankind, one must not rule out spontaneous and sporadic invention, and one must not over-press the idea of survival; but where upon a coast long subject to Greek influence certain types seem to recur, we cannot help being drawn to the idea of common origin. No doubt besides religious and military dancing, there were imitative dances, such as that which may often be seen in the playground of our own elementary schools, which clearly is based upon marriage by capture.[1]

When we get to the middle age of Provence, we find dances belonging to the various guilds, and the social value of the dance, not as a "rag," but as a seemly element of education, is noted by mediæval writers.

Dances became localized, but the Farandole remained chief, and it certainly seems to carry us back to what we know of the old Greek chorus dancing. Being as it is a chain dance, may it not perhaps be the true descendant of the dance with which the Greek chorus filed into its place in the orchestra? That word itself means, we know, the "dancing space."

Other dances, such as the *Boufets*, are thought to go back to the Roman carnival dances; but they lack both the grace and the dignity of the Greek fashion.

Let all travellers, at any rate, lose no opportunity of witnessing Provençal dancing, gracious or rowdy, which they will be sure to find on the yearly festivals of towns or villages. Apart from history, they will have their interest; and dance, as song, is a true mark of the sunlit valleys and coasts of Provence.

THE DRUM AND FLUTE OF PROVENCE[2]

The Provençal drum is not military. Its business is to mark rhythm for the dance: it is a solo instrument, except

[1] The song which goes with this dance is usually, I think, "There came three dukes a-riding."

[2] I make acknowledgments to a short article in "En Provence" for June, 1923.

where it goes with the flute, played, let us understand, by the drummer himself. The drum is of walnut, sometimes joined to make the cylinder, rarely a solid hollowed out. Its skin is from the dog. The player swings the drum on his left arm, holds his flute in his left hand, his drumstick in his right ; the drumstick is of wood (sometimes whalebone) with a knob or " olive " at the beating end.

The art of playing the two instruments is not a simple one. Experts have developed its technique till it is almost as elaborate as any other kinds of music-making. There have been many famous masters of drumming, and the art is still very much alive. But it is chiefly with the dance that we find the drummer-flautist.

THE GOLDEN GOAT

We have already referred to the strange legend of the Golden Goat. Daudet has a pathetic story of the goat of Monsieur Seguin that fought all the night, and yet at last the wolf ate it. And indeed, Provence is full of goats, and they always like to get on the top of the heights ; they somehow feel that as they go higher the pasturage will become better. Paul Arène, who comes from Sisteron, has written a charming romance on the Golden Goat. He had heard again and again the stories of the people who had seen it, or believed that they had seen it, sometimes near the sea, sometimes by the Roman monuments at St. Rémy, and sometimes just north of the village of Les Baux. The legend tells us that it can be seen throughout Provence, sometimes in the Camargue, sometimes in the Crau, even as far east as the mountains which slope down towards Cannes and Nice. Some people think that it is only a representation in popular language of that which is unapproachable, unrealizable. That perhaps may be, but the proper work of the Golden Goat is a very valuable one. It is, or supposed to be, the guarding of all the ancient monuments of Provence, and all the treasures which may perhaps be buried beneath them. Should anyone try to touch with sacrilegious hand these glorious ancient buildings, that have come down to us from bygone days, there is the Golden Goat ready to butt them away. And so it has come that the Golden Goat is a kind of protecting deity of all that is ancient and precious in Provence.

THE CIGALE

Provence without the Cigale ! It would be, as the Scottish widower said, "Very peaceful and very dull." Peaceful indeed ; we should not be dinned all through the hotter part of the day by what Vergil rightly calls the "hoarse" cigale. Just when we want to feel restful, this persistent and importunate creature, its sound-box and membranes becoming (as it seems) more resonant in the heat,[1] grinds out its monotonous "crack-crack." Poets say that when it is extra hot, the cigale sleeps also. Tennyson ("Œnone") has

> The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
> Rests like a shadow, and the cicala sleeps,

and Paul Arène has the same happy imagination. All one can say is that in some odd way one gets to ignore—perhaps not even to hear—their crack-crack. These two poets are not the first who have written about the cigale. There does not seem to have been any mystic reason for keeping quiet about these creatures who cannot keep quiet about themselves; as there certainly was some reason which prevented the poets of Greece and Rome talking about the silent glimmering fireflies. That the Greeks evidently liked their sound is interesting and significant ; it was, no doubt, the rhythm of it which appealed to that rhythmical people.

The Provençal cigale (*cigala plebeia*, or "of the ash-tree") is larger than its neighbour of south-west France. Its chant is a warning that you are near, if not in, the land of vine and olive. Its plebeian vulgarity consists perhaps in its thickness of body, and its blackish top colour. Their larvæ were eaten by the Athenians, finding them as they issued from the soil in summer. But if J. H. Fabre is right—and he should be—it would take long to find a dish, and their rarity must have excused their quantity. Perhaps they were only used for the savoury, or were somehow turned into a sweetmeat. Or, as Fabre suggests, the whole idea that the larvæ were good eating may have been a "leg-pull" by the countryman of the townsman, since the coveted delicacy was so rare to come by. Certain it is that cats eat the Australian cigales, but it is thought that the diet does not improve them.

Anyone who wants to find out how the noise is made can easily see for himself. Only the male can creak ; his sound

[1] For these entomological details I rely on an excellent article in "En Provence" for September, 1923.

box is clear to see if, having dealt him a kindly death, you open his two scaly plates and find the two hollows below, with their membrane on the walls. At the bottom of each sound box are the mysterious " mirrors," reflecting prismatic colours, but they really serve as sound-amplifiers.

The beauty of the little creature consists chiefly in its delicate wings. Its great " bulls'-eyes " are not very lovely. But it is a nice, gently-disposed animal and is said to be amenable to whistling, climbing up a stick in its desire of so glad a sound.

As every one knows, it is from the cigale—not really the grasshopper—that we ought to learn the lesson of careful providence. Alas, even our elementary school children now know that the cigale can get on quite nicely in winter without food. Moreover, it possibly does live, as poets tell us, on dew, and so is never a heavy feeder.

You cannot love Provence without loving the cigale. And, whether you love him or not, you must suffer him gladly ; stop him you cannot.

PIERRE OF PROVENCE

The shepherds of Provence are great astronomers. They all have strange and fantastic stories about the stars, and they see in the stars reports or reminders very often of the ancient legends of their country. We remember how in the *Arlésienne*, Belshazzar tells a little boy of the tales and legends that he reads from the sky and off a book. One of these is a charming story of Pierre de Provence and Maguelone. There are long Provençal legends, but this is one of the most charming because it is so thoroughly inspired with the love of the country.

Pierre is a son of John of Provence, who had been obliged to retire to his lordship of Cavaillon. Pierre was well educated, as one who might some day be called upon to rule the country should be, and as he grew up he incurred the jealousy of Robert, his cousin, whom he ultimately beat in a tourney.

Meanwhile there come travellers from Naples telling the story of the wonders of the Court of Naples, and especially of the beauty of the daughter of the queen, Princess Magueline. Pierre is determined to go and see this celebrated beauty, and arrived there just before some great festival. Among those who offered themselves at the tournament next

day was an unknown knight who had beaten all other adversaries. Pierre challenges him, defeats him, and is at once the most popular man in Naples. His victory had been applauded by Maguelone herself, and he is permitted, according to the custom of those days, to become the chevalier-servant of the princess. There was no long step from this knightly service to affection and love, but Pierre still keeps his name and origin a mystery, and all the attempts of Maguelone to find out who the charming stranger is, are vain. Through the old nurse of the princess Pierre sends a ring that came to him from his mother, and begs her to wear it for ever. At length, for hitherto the lovers had had very little opportunity of meeting, Pierre tells his story, and Maguelone gives him a chain of gold which she is wearing round her neck. Pierre gives her a third ring over and above two which he had already sent by her nurse.

However, the course of true love is not to go too smoothly, for Pierre's old enemy, Jacques, follows him to the Court. From him Pierre learns in a roundabout way that his parents at home believe him dead, and are in deep lamentation for his loss. He begs the princess to allow him to go home and see them again, but she will not let him go alone, and on a dark night they fly off together. When Maguelone, tired out with travelling, is lying asleep under a tree, she leaves upon the ground a little box half open, and in this Pierre sees his three rings tied by a ribbon. Pierre was much moved with sentiment at seeing that she was faithful to her promise to take with her the rings wherever she went. But, unfortunately, at that moment down swoops a raven from a tree, seizes the ribbon, and flies off with the rings. Pierre, mad at the thought that his princess should wake and miss her rings, pursues the raven, which flies slowly out to sea. There is a boat upon the shore. Pierre leaps into it, but the waves and the wind drive the boat far from the coast, and Pierre is left in mid-ocean. There he must have died but that a pirate boat finds him and takes him to the Sultan somewhere in North Africa. The Sultan demands a ransom and offers to set him free, but Pierre will not impoverish his poor parents more, but offers to take service in the army for the Sultan, and promises to serve him faithfully, provided he must never fight against the Christians. Pierre becomes, as it were, the Governor of the Kingdom. No bribes, no promises, can sway him from the path of justice. The Sultan does every-

thing to try to persuade him to turn Mussulman and to remain with him for ever, but Pierre will give no promises; he is always thinking of his beautiful princess whom he left asleep under a tree years ago.

So things went on till at last a conspiracy is made in the palace to murder the Sultan. Pierre saves his life, and is granted his freedom. Loaded with riches he sets sail towards his beloved Provence.

The poor princess in the meanwhile had found upon the beach the hat of her beloved Pierre. She believed him dead, and finding some pilgrims who were then going to Rome, she went for consolation to the Holy City, and there she dwelt in a hospice for poor pilgrims. But Maguelone proved so excellent an inmate of the hospice that the Superior begged her to go and establish a similar hospice in Provence. She goes, therefore, to found this little hospice by the mouth of the Rhône, near Aigues-Mortes. She calls it, in remembrance of her sweetheart, the Hospice of St. Peter. The fame of the Superior of this hospice spreads throughout Provence. The mother of Pierre hears of her, and Maguelone reveals to her her sorrow. She still believes that he may be alive.

One day a fisherman brings her three rings that have been found in the body of a large fish captured close to the convent. She recognizes her own lost rings, the gifts of Pierre. The Countess of Cavaillon concludes that Pierre must be dead, but Maguelone is inspired with new hope.

Seven years from the loss of Pierre there is a knock at the door of the hospice, and sailors ask admission for a ship-wrecked man nearly drowned in the storm and badly wounded in the fight against the tempest. Maguelone allows him to be brought into the house and nurses him back to life. As Pierre recovers consciousness he bombards his nurse with questions. Is he really in Provence? And has any news been received of his beloved princess? For a long time Maguelone keeps silence. At last she cannot any longer withhold her transports of joy, and says to him, "I am your lost Maguelone." We need not pursue the lovers further. Pierre recovers, and in due time unites the crowns both of Provence and Naples.

The story is one that appears and reappears in all sorts of different shapes. Tales that show a link between Provence and Naples, and tales of Provençals captured by pirates and carried off to Africa are fairly common, but the tale of Pierre unites

all that is best in Provençal folk-lore of love rightly rewarded, of passionate affection for Provence itself, to the nobility of character of Pierre himself, the heir of a long line of rulers of Provence.

There is a pretty Crusader story that centres round the old castle of Méouilles. Arthur of Allons went off to the Holy Land not only full of crusading zeal, but also in the hope of acquiring renown so that he might claim the hand of his sweetheart Clementine. One need not say that Clementine prayed night and day for her soldier lover, but terrible things happened at the castle during his absence. It was captured by enemies of the lord of the castle, who was killed, and his widow and Clementine had to escape as best they could. They took refuge with one of their old vassals called William, and Clementine, great lady as she was, was so thankful for his protection that she tried to repay his kindness by helping with the cooking and acting shepherdess to his small flock.

The reader will guess the rest of the story. One day the shepherdess sees a magnificent knight riding past on a white charger; he stops by the ruined castle, contemplating with great sorrow the ashes which told its story only too clearly. Of course the hero and heroine are not long in recognizing one another. Arthur rebuilds the castle, and does not forget to enrich the worthy William who had been so faithful a vassal.

The story is one which was sung by the troubadours for many years up and down Provence.

THE PASTORALE

The history of the *Pastorale* naturally has its roots deep in the soil. Christmas and the joys of Christmas appeal naturally to the happier peoples of sun-bathed Provence more than the sorrowful passages of the Gospel story.[1] The little home-made crèches, the simple figures known as the Santons, to be seen in the Marseille regional museum, the pastoral ceremonies seen (for example) at the famous midnight mass of Les Baux, are all witnesses to the way in which the Nativity story went home to the hearts of the Provençals. The name "pastorale" arises simply from the presence of the shepherds in the story itself, and the many shepherds of Provençal hills and plains

[1] There were, however, Passion plays (as well as Parable plays) in Provence, at Aubagne, Draguignan, Aix, Grasse, and elsewhere.

who would be the most appropriate actors in any representation thereof. At Les Baux the shepherdesses are there too ; they have the lamb ready for the gift to the new-born King. The chief shepherd offers it ; the chief shepherdess follows ; all with gracious and dignified gestures. The little lamb must play its part, and must be caused to bleat at the elevation, though in its strange little go-cart, drawn by a staid ram, and under its little arch of candles, the lamb has full cause for bleating.

The *Pastorale* then comes from representations, by shepherds, of the scene in which shepherds played their humble-noble part. The ecclesiastics would not be out of this so religious ceremony, and the number of " actors " grew. There was a natural tendency to introduce comic characters—provided in the mystery plays by the devil, the shepherds (or some of them) and even Herod and Pontius Pilate,—and as the comic and popular element grew, the church became a less fitting place for the performances. The simple but cunning Bartolomiéu (surely a Biblical name) became a centre-piece, and round him revolved the village drunkard, the miller, the ravaging Bohemian, and the local authorities, such as the police, the gamekeepers, and the Mayor. There was always a blind man healed, and always a prophet (a convenient aid to a simple audience). Reverence usually kept the Virgin till the end, when she would appear, silent, in a tableau. The whole thing was gradually (but naturally) modernized, and anachronism runs wild in the *pastorale* as now played, and is indeed one of its charms. The buffoonery was (as in the harlequinade of the pantomime) on regular lines ; someone must fall down a well, sometimes someone is fished up in a draw-net, and so on.

While room is left for " gag," the *pastorales* usually acted to-day are written. Music, often based on old church music, has been added, and some of the songs are really graceful and charming. Generally all is in Provençal, but there may be bits of Latin or French, especially for the angel. The jokes, so far as I could follow them, were often of a sort that might better, perhaps, have been given in Latin ; but they never failed to bring down the house, and the lower they were, the more they brought it down.

Provençal preparations for Christmas are well described by Paul Arène in " Domnine : "

Christmas drew near. The sky seemed fairer, the voice of bells more resonant ; on market days long troops of gobbling turkeys crossed the

town . . . grandmothers and mothers came to buy each their turkey which they fattened up with nuts.

In the evening, with two polished pebbles, one flat, one more pointed —primitive tools found in the bed of the stream—you shelled almonds to make the nougat. . . .

A fortnight back Sister Nanon had planted St. Barbe's corn, whose greenness, out of season, a symbol of resurrection, was to decorate the Christmas dinner-table. For this, one just puts a pinch of corn in a saucer, with a little water, and that is all your sowing done. Patience ! a day or two, in the chimney corner, up comes St. Barbe's corn.

" The corn grows," said Sister Nanon ; " the Star Beautiful has risen. Soon the shepherds will start, and the Kings from afar will soon begin their long journey."

All this—kings, shepherds, in the form of " santons "—was in Sister Nanon's box. Domnine helped Sister Nanon to unpack the little clay figures from their wrappings.

There was, with the ox and ass, the Child Jesus on His straw, and the Holy Family. Gaspard, Balthazar, and Melchior, the good black King were followed by a caravan of camels. There was the " Man in rapture," and the " Woman in rapture," kneeling, their eyes lit with ecstasy. There was the knife-grinder, whose wheel makes sparks. There was the grumbling miller who, wakened in his first sleep by the cry of the passers-by and the music of the angels, appeared at the window of his barn, lantern in hand, nightcap on head. Peasants, men and women, all brought a humble gift ; a basket of eggs, a lamb, a honey-cake. The gipsy woman brought her playing-cards ; the convict, in red, offered his broken chains. Only the drummer gave no gift, for he carries all his fortune on his back, he has only his drum and fife, but he will amuse the Holy Child with a morning song, and will not be the least welcomed of the party.

Before all else it was necessary to set up the cradle-scene, a very important business, and to contrive on the narrow table-cloth, with its mountains, rivers, chasms, rocks, farms, castles, villages, bridges, roads, that ideal " land that is very far off " in the midst of which so many persons, in picturesque groups, are to play their part.

In eight days of scouring the mountain-side Domnine would come back chilled but happy with velvety mosses, branches covered with lichens—just like little trees—odd pebbles, which would go to the fashioning of an unrecognizable Galilee, but one well adapted to enshrine —regardless of local colour—the *santons* bravely arrayed in Provençal peasant dress.—" Domnine," chapter v.

THE LIFE OF THE MAS

Mistral has thrown an idyllic glamour round Provençal farm life, and apart from variety of climate, farm life is pretty well the same all the world over—man goes forth to his labour until the evening, sweats in the day, " and all night, sleeps in Elysium." But climate matters ; sunshine by day, clear stars by night, make all possible difference from our northern mists. Not that Provence cannot be cold enough ; every one

knows how bitter the mistral cuts ; but where Nature is a hard nurse of man, she is usually a nurse of hard men ; where she is generous and buxom, the race is kindlier and often more open-hearted. The conservatism of the farm makes for a settled mind ; old beliefs, old superstitions, old customs hold ; there is Arcady. We must not, however, make the common error of thinking that the further south you go the less hard is the work. I suppose the Provençal farmer works and must work as hard as anybody. His amusements are few and simple. The nature of the ground does not seem to offer itself to modern methods, except in matter of irrigation ; he must therefore depend on and work with the " tranquil operations of perpetual Providence."

There is clearly a good deal of the patriarchal left. In the proud, headstrong Maître Ramon, Mistral perhaps wished to paint the dangers of overdoing autocracy, the clash between crabbed age and youth. But this, with the fierce quarrels of the suitors, is the only blot on Mistral's picture, drawn (as can be seen by a comparison of his " Mémoires ") from his own experience. The picture in " Mirèio," moreover, is rather " idyllized " than idealized from life. At the beginning of the poem we find the " Farm of the Lotus-flower " noted for its hospitality ; Vincent and his father make straight for it in a storm. They have known it before, and Vincent especially remembers the gracious girl who was not above seeing to his needs. Indeed, she looks after the labourers' meal, which they all take together, calling afterwards on Maître Ambroise, Vincent's father, for a song. There is plenty of women's work, for " Mirèio " belongs to the age of silkworm-breeding : the mulberry leaves must be gathered (this makes the most charming episode of the poem), the cocoons unwound, with chatter and singing ; in the Museon Arlaten one can follow easily enough the process with the help of little models. There is stalwart work for men ; and no doubt Mistral chooses for the suitors the three types, other than the ordinary farmer, of Provence ; the shepherd, the " guardian " of Camargue horses, and the tamer of Camargue bulls. Then there is the harvest scene, and the reapers' farandole round " St. John's fires." All are happy together, master and men ; there is indeed nothing to trouble the " Lotus Farm " except the arch-troubler, Love—and he it is who causes the great " Assemblage " of the workers, who are sent off to search for the lost Mireille—reapers, carters, tillers, gleaners, shepherds—and

that is the last we see of the Lotus Farm, soon to be wrapped in mourning and desolation.

In his "Mémoires" Mistral tells his own story. It was at St. John's-tide that his father, Maître François, saw among the gleaners a handsome girl, keeping a little behind the others. She proved to be daughter of the Mayor of Maillane, who, well to do, but with a large family, bade his daughters earn their own little fineries. The news of the poet's birth found the master in his fields, as usual; he stopped only to invoke a blessing on his boy, and turned to his work again. At the Arles museum one sees a tableau of the offerings to the new born: eggs, bread, salt, and a match (or sometimes a knitting needle) and the wish "May you be 'all there,' as complete as an egg; good, as bread; sharp, as salt; and straight, as a needle."

The growing boy was always among the farm hands, and joined in the evening gathering when at supper the doings of the day were gone through, and plans no doubt made for the next one. The signal to rise was given by the chief horseman closing his clasp-knife.

At Christmas, of course, special doings: the Yule-log, the gifts to the labourers, who go home early, save only a few who have no homes, and they are made welcome to the house party. The log must be of a fruit tree; it is carried thrice round the kitchen; with the refrain "Joy, Joy, Joy!" the patriarch of the house pours a glass of "cooked wine" [1] over it, and when the first flame catches, he cries, crossing himself, "Fire, Fire! burn the Yule!"

On the table burn three candles (a sign of good, not evil), there are saucers of "Christmas corn"—planted each St. Barbe's Day in water, and never absent from the little Nativity scenes set up in the churches; and all sorts of good things, snails to begin with, are spread about, not forgetting the great Christmas loaf, of which a quarter must first be given to some poor person. Maître François tells how he got leave from the army in Spain to "set the Yule log on the hearth at home," and shows the well-worn document authorizing him to "go throughout the Republic, and to the devil, if he likes," written by the kindly captain.

Then there is the Day of the Kings: all the children run off to meet the procession, and only see the glory and the

[1] This is boiled in the making, and is kept for occasions. It forms part of the present given to the workpeople.

splendour that passes behind the Western mountains—but later, in the church, they find the kings themselves, surrounded by all the "santons," before the manger; and one of the kings is black!

Then there are old songs and legends, in the tongue of Provence, sung by the mother as she spins or knits, odd bits of folk-lore of elves, of the White Hen, the Golden Goat: lessons in the stars, from the old shepherds; journeys to Avignon, to Vaucluse, to Saintes-Maries, at pilgrimage times: some schooling (and the story of Mistral's own schooldays is wonderfully good reading; the old ruined monastery, the quaint old master, too busy catching new pupils in the country-side to teach those he had; the strange wandering Father Philip, who used to come and cry to the master "Donnat! Give me back my bell!" and the school at last breaking up for ever on the simple avowal of the worthy master "My children, there is nothing more for you to eat!")—and then studies further afield at Avignon, Nîmes and Aix—but always the farm in the background, the farm "home of clear, Biblical, and idyllic poetry," which the young Mistral crystallized into his idyll-epic "Mirèio."

Other farms of Provence have not produced a Mistral, but the one picture must stand for many, and it is a pleasing sample of the old Provençal life, still lingering, and we may hope, long to linger, in the land that Mistral loved.

CHAPTER XIX

TO PROVENCE BY ROAD[1]

THE traveller who is in a hurry to reach the Sunny South is bound to the train, be it blue or any other colour, which whirls him along all through the night and brings him to his destination about noon the next day.

But those who possess cars or motor-cycles I would strongly advise to use them for the purpose of reaching Provence and the Riviera. Many are deterred from making the attempt for several reasons. Some fear damage to the car in transit ; some fear their French is not good enough, while others fear the expense.

The first objection is answered by the car being covered against risk or damage in transit by the ordinary insurance policy, but careful note should be taken that this cover only applies to the ordinary Channel crossing, and if the car should be sent back by sea, say, from Marseille, a separate policy should be taken out for this special occasion. The R.A.C. or A.A. representative will always arrange this. The railway companies handle cars with great care and skill, and it is difficult to find even a scratch which can be attributed to the carelessness of their staff. Next, a knowledge of French is useful, but many English people motor in France whose vocabulary is of the most limited character.

As for the third objection. The matter of expenses, once the customs deposit and the steamer fares for car and passengers have been paid, rests very largely with the owner, since the journey may be made just as expensive or as economical as he likes.

Some prefer to lunch and sleep in only the largest towns, and in the very best hotels, while others, who like the open air and the simple life, take their luncheons and tea-baskets, replenish them in the market-places of the charming old French towns and take their meals *au grand air*. When the day's journey comes to an end a modest hotel is sought, and

[1] Kindly contributed by the Editor of "The Autocar."

when the bill is presented in the morning the motorist, remembering the excellent dinner, good wine and comfortable beds, feels he has really had value for money.

Hotels, appointed by the Touring Club de France, the Automobile Club de France, and mentioned in that most indispensable of handbooks, the Michelin Guide, are almost invariably satisfactory. This book tells the travelling motorist all he wants to know, and besides giving all grades of hotels, notes the places to see in each town, gives the distances to the next towns, mentions the position of the customs houses on the frontiers, has a list of ferries and their charges, and in a word, gives every item of information the traveller requires.

Before planning a motor tour in France, membership of one of the two great motoring organizations is essential, as these are the only bodies entitled to issue the necessary documents. Associate membership of the Royal Automobile Club, and membership of the Automobile Association, cost each two guineas.

These organizations do for the motorist not only what he can do for himself, and therefore save him an enormous amount of trouble, but also deal with the complexities of customs and international licences which, when stated in plain black and white, are somewhat terrifying.

Many people, and I am one of them, prefer to plan their own tours, but should the intending traveller desire it the motoring organization will work out the route in detail, giving all intermediate and total distances, the route marked out on a map, and a list of recommended hotels. Passenger tickets are issued for the sea trip, space is booked for the car, and the organization's guides personally see to the shipment and unloading. It is strongly advisable to consult with these men on the subject of gratuities, and by so doing much unnecessary tipping can be avoided.

Now, as to the formalities. Before an Englishman may drive a car or motor-cycle on the Continent, he must be the holder of an International Travelling Pass, which serves as a licence for the car and driver or drivers, and avoids registration abroad. The holder may still use his British number but must attach an oval plaque bearing the letters G.B. to the rear number-plate. Applicants for the I.T.P. must supply two unmounted photographs of each driver (head and shoulders only) and measuring about two inches square. This regulation

applies not only in the case of an owner and his chauffeur, but when a party consists of several people of whom two or more are likely to take a turn at the wheel. Before the I.T.P. is issued the applicant must be the holder of a British driving licence actually in force. No one whose licence has been suspended may hold an I.T.P. Again, before the pass is granted, the car has to be inspected and the capacity of the owner, his chauffeur, or any friend likely to drive during the trip, must be tested by a qualified examiner. The cost is from one guinea for one car and one driver, to two guineas if there are four drivers, in addition to 3*s.* 6*d.* for the G.B. plate. The charges are based on an International Order controlling the conditions under which cars may be used in countries other than those in which their owners reside.

Before the Customs papers can be issued, a form must be filled up stating the present value of the car in sterling and certain details concerning it, of which the more important are the weight and an assurance that the engine and chassis numbers are correctly stated and that the number of spare tyres is also mentioned; since in France not more than two complete spare tyres (i.e., cover and tube) may be carried. Two small plates must be obtained, on which the weight in kilogrammes, engine numbers and name and address of the owner are inscribed.

We now come to the question of duties. These vary with different countries. France exacts a duty of 63 per cent *ad valorem*, which is arrived at by means of the following formula: Begin by taking away the number you first thought of . . . Actually,

(1) Value of car, say	£1,000
(2) Take 45 per cent of value . .	450
(3) Add value of car to 45 per cent. .	1,450
(4) Take 12 per cent of line (3) . .	174
Add lines (2) and (4), which is the deposit required	624

Italian and Spanish duties are based on weight calculated on a sliding scale.

Fortunately the organizations are able to obviate the necessity of the owner finding the whole amount of the duty required in cash, and have arranged to let the traveller off with a deposit of £100 in cash and the balance covered by a banker's guarantee. In cases where the duty involved is £100, or less, the money representing the duty must be deposited. When, on

his return, the customs papers are surrendered, the deposit is returned.

Customs forms are of two kinds : the Triptyque, or three-leaved customs paper, generally used when only one country is visited ; and the *Carnet de Douane*, which will frank the holder through all countries adhering to the international agreement. This *Carnet* is essential if the traveller motors through France to the Riviera and returns home by way of Italy and Switzerland.[1]

So far as the French ports are concerned, all the visitor has to do is to hand all his papers to the representative of the organization to which he belongs, go and have lunch or tea, and return to the quay, pay for his petrol, disburse a few *pourboires* and start on his journey.

At a land frontier station he approaches the customs officers with a smile, touches his hat (this is most necessary) and hands over his papers. It is essential for the motorist to stop at the last French customs-house, but not obligatory for the customs people to ask him to do so. If the papers are not cleared by the officials of the country he is about to leave, it is more than likely he will lose his deposit, so care is necessary. When dealing with a French official, politeness goes a very long way ; offer a cigarette, pat his dog : such procedures will often smooth over apparently insurmountable difficulties. A little flag-staff on the radiator filler cap, with the French and British flags flying side by side, creates an excellent impression. Once I flew a pair of these flags, and on reaching Italy ran down the French flag and hoisted the Italian ; an act which was much appreciated. It is astonishing how far these little courtesies go in the Latin countries.

Is it to be wondered at that I referred earlier to these formalities as somewhat terrifying ? They certainly seem so, but so efficiently do the Touring Departments of the R.A.C. and A.A. do their work that no careful individuals of ordinary intelligence can go wrong.

Petrol costs a little more in France than in England, and its price varies considerably. It is dear at the port of arrival, and only enough should be purchased there to carry one on to the *octroi* outside the town. Immediately beyond it there is usually a garage where it will be much cheaper, so it is better to fill up there, and not only the tank but any spare can which

[1] At the moment the *Carnet* does not apply to Austria, but there are hopes that it may shortly do so.

may be carried. Petrol is cheaper near [1] the great distributing centres, such as Havre, Paris, and Marseille, and dearer in the more distant districts. It is always cheaper outside the towns. All petrol, farm produce and the like has to pay *octroi* or Town Dues. These do not worry the traveller by train, but they do concern the motorist. Often he will see on approaching the town: *OCTROI . . . Mètres, ARRÊT OBLIGATOIRE*. He must then keep his eyes skinned, and on approaching the *octroi bureau* he must look for an official. If no one is on the look-out he may proceed, but if he sees an official, who, by his demeanour, calls for a stop, stop he must, and declare any article liable to the due he may be carrying. These regulations differ in various towns; some officials only care about comestibles, which the foreign visitor never carries, while others insist that the petrol in the tank should pay a small tax. Rouen is one of these and Paris is worse than all. Here a posse of cars waits at the City gates; the driver must descend and *must* declare the amount of fuel in his tank. On this he pays some small trifle and receives a ticket which entitles him to a rebate on leaving the capital.

Unless the traveller has any definite reason for entering Paris, he should not do so. The roads which approach it are bad, to drive within its precincts is a torture, and to hang about outside the *octrois*, going in and going out, is not really worth while. If Paris must be visited, it is best to put up the car, say, at Versailles or Fontainebleau, and go there by train.

French roads are built on a definite system. They are wide, straight, and invariably well-graded. Even in the Alps no worse gradient than 1 in 9 will be found. They are mostly built of material quite incapable of standing up against modern motor traffic; the country is poor, and cannot afford to keep up its roads as we keep up ours. No other European country can. Main through routes are apt to be badly worn, and a sharp look-out must be kept all the time. The roads are mostly dead straight, and if a straight smooth stretch is encountered, the temptation to drive fast, especially if the country is uninteresting, as it often is, is irresistible. A change of colour is nearly always a sign of a change of surface, and the driver must be prepared to check his speed quickly or he will crash into pot-holes, which may break a spring; indeed, to carry a spare one is not a bad idea, even though it may never be needed.

[1] That is, *outside* the *octroi* limit.

A careful study of the map is wise. It is all very well to trust to the touring body of which the motorist is a member, for the route, and, generally speaking, the routes given are excellent. As I said before, the motorist must be prepared to expect roads inferior to those in England, but this need not deter him. If some are bad there are plenty of others which are good, and very often roads may be found practically parallel to the great trunk roads, which either are excellent—or may be much worse. However, it is all in the day's march.

French roads, I repeat, are not only built on a system, but are arranged on a system—a system which we British have copied. The motorist should study the Michelin Guide, which will tell him how they are classified into *Routes Nationales* (Main Roads), *Routes Departementales* (Secondary Roads), and *Routes Vicinales* (by-roads), or, as we should call them " District Council roads." The main roads and departmental roads are all systematically numbered.

Sign-posts are good and accurate, but the old type bear letters much too small to be of real service to the motorist. The war has done some good in this respect, and large letters indicate the route in many places.

Taken as a whole, the country in France is less beautiful than in England. Normandy and Brittany may be compared to Sussex, Devon and Cornwall, but with better engineered roads. A hundred miles south consists of an uninteresting plain. Take, for instance, the stretch from Dreux to Chartres, which is unspeakably ugly. There is a town called Ugley in Essex, and there is said of it " Ugly church, ugly steeple, ugly parson and ugly people." To the plain of Chartres this epithet certainly applies, except as regards the church and steeple (of the parsons I profess ignorance). Farther and farther south the country becomes better and better, and after leaving the Loire valley there is a choice of three good routes to the south.

Taking these from west to east ; No. 1 lies through the beautiful Cevennes country and charming Le Puy to Alais, but the road often climbs to high altitudes, and though in this district we are getting towards the south, snow may render the track impassable. In an open winter this may not happen, but it is wise to make inquiries beforehand. Again, the route leads direct to Roman France and such towns as Alais, Nîmes, Arles, Aigues-Mortes and Saintes-Maries, while Tarascon and Avignon are within easy reach. Route No. 2 eventually brings the

tourist to the same district but is not so attractive, being the great highway to the south. It passes through the Burgundy wine district and part of a slightly alternative route teems with such names as Beaune, Nuits, Chambertin, and many others which figure in every wine list. Route No. 3 is clearly the most attractive from the scenery point of view, and extends from Lyon to Grenoble, thereafter following what is known as the "*Route d'Hiver des Alpes*," passing through the valleys and over the passes in a district which Switzerland can hardly surpass. It does not take long to reach the snow-line in winter time, and soon the motoring party are driving between lofty walls of snow amid the Alps in all their winter grandeur. A snow plough is kept to brush the road clear, but sometimes the snow gets ahead of the plough and the route is impassable, despite the assurance of the *Syndicats d'Initiative*, so in case of any doubt it is best to inquire of some garage at Grenoble.

Now, I have numbered these routes 1, 2, and 3, beginning at a line drawn, say, through Nevers, but I have said nothing about the great trunk roads leading from the coast, nor of the Channel crossings.

I will deal with the latter first. The difference between the time of the sea trips between Dover and Calais, and Folkestone and Boulogne, is so small as hardly to affect the worst sailor, so the preference lies with Folkestone, which is nearer our ultimate destination than Dover, and from which there is a boat leaving at 11 a.m. which allows a start on the other side to be made after lunch.

The Newhaven-Dieppe service has not much to recommend it for a winter crossing, the boats are smaller and the sea may be rough, and since the arrival is at 2.55 p.m. and it will take at least three-quarters of an hour after disembarking to clear the car, it would be nearly dark before a start could be made. Dieppe, however, provides the shortest road journey by a few miles.

Although the longest sea passage, the Southampton-Havre route has much to commend it, even in mid-winter. A start can be made from London in the afternoon, one can dine in Southampton and the car need not be embarked before 8 p.m. The party can then turn in to their comfortable cabins and may be sound asleep before the boat starts at midnight. The steamers are excellently appointed, are practically vibrationless, and behave well in bad weather ; an excellent breakfast is served in the morning and the motorist can be on the

way at 9 a.m. The distance to the south from Havre is only a few miles longer than from Dieppe and a good deal less than from Boulogne. It should be remembered, however, that the Southampton-Havre boats do not run on Sundays. Those sections of the Southern Railway which were formerly the S.E. & C.R. and the L.B. & S.C.R. charge for cars by the wheelbase ; e.g., a car with an 8 ft. 6 in. wheelbase costs £6, but what was the L. & S.W.R. prior to the amalgamation, charges according to weight ; e.g., a car weighing 20 cwt. costs £4 15*s*.

Now a few hints as to driving. The general rule in Europe is to drive to the right, which is not so terrifying as it sounds. What really happens is that the driver at once has it firmly fixed in his mind that he *must* keep to the right, and after one hour's observance of the custom the idea becomes so firmly fixed that when he returns to England he will find he has acquired a habit difficult to break ; at least, that has been my experience.

Driving on the passes required a little skill, and it will soon be found that British car designers have, in many cases, devoted less attention to cooling and brakes than they would have had they themselves toured on the Continent. Four speeds are always better than three, and if a three-speed car is driven up a long climb on which the second speed is too low for the beautifully consistent gradients found on the French passes, there is an obvious tendency to drive the engine too hard, which must be resisted, otherwise the cooling water will boil. Again, on the down grade, brakes are liable to overheat, so side and foot brakes should be used alternately, while it is sometimes preferable to engage a lower gear, using the brake only to check speed at the corners. It may, on occasions, but not often so far as France is concerned, be found that the lock is inadequate, which will necessitate reversing at corners. In climbing, it is advisable to drive close inside the curve, as thereby the corner is more easily negotiated. There is a speed limit in France, but it is universally ignored except in populous places. Nevertheless, while high speeds may be indulged in when the road is safe, every caution should be exercised, as if an accident should occur the motorist should always remember that French law, contrary to English, assumes that every offender is guilty until he proves his innocence, so that the procedure is, that he is locked up first and inquiries are made afterwards.

Petrol is known as *esssence*, and sold either in cans or by a petrol pump by the 5 *litres*—rather over a gallon. Oil is sold by the can and, contrary to English practice, the can is charged

for if taken, and the cost, usually one franc, is returnable at any garage. Vacuum oil, known as Mobiloil, is sold practically everywhere, and is absolutely dependable.

Many handbooks of useful phrases are to be purchased, and these may be obtained from the motoring organizations which the traveller joins. They give most of the necessary terms, but I doubt if any will tell the motorist that if he is asked to turn his car round and retrace his tracks, he should *faire la demi-tour*, which is, after all, logical, because if he made the complete turn he would again face the way in which he was travelling, which would be quite wrong. The word *faire* has many uses, but the word *coup* has even more. If the traveller wishes to tell the repairer to ease a bolt, he asks him to give it *quelques coups d'une lime*—in other words, to touch it up with a file, or, if he wants it gently tapped in, he asks for *quelques coups legers d'un marteau*. French is a delightful language, and the French mechanic is an artist who loves his work.

Thus we have paved the road for even a timid motorist to brave the crossing and make his way to Provence. There we leave him. He should know (if he has read so far) what to go and see. We cannot personally conduct him there ; he must conduct himself. But in wishing him a very happy journey and safe return we beg him also (especially if he has rather lost his timidity) to remember that he is the guest of an hospitable people, and to show that consideration and courtesy which few people so deserve to receive—seeing that they are so ready to give them—as the Provençals.

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